DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 423 981 PS 026 911

AUTHOR	Holliday, Albert E., Ed.; Holliday, Joan M., Ed.
TITLE	The Journal of Educational Relations, 1997.
INSTITUTION	Educational Communication Center, Camp Hill, PA.
ISSN	ISSN-0741-3653
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	162p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Educational Communication Center, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657; phone: 800-537-2624 (toll-free), 717-761-6620, outside U.S.: 717-66-0574 (Individual rate, $48 per year, single copy, $20; library rate, $60 per year; add $4 for subscriptions outside the United States; payment must be in U.S. funds).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Journal of Educational Relations; v18 n1-4 1997
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrators; Advocacy; Citizenship Education; Educational Change; Educational Finance; Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Family School Relationship; Financial Support; Instruction; Interprofessional Relationship; Parent Teacher Cooperation; Philanthropic Foundations; Public Relations; *School Administration; *School Community Relationship; Student Attitudes; Teacher Student Relationship; Teachers; Teaching (Occupation)

ABSTRACT

This document consists of four issues of the "Journal of Educational Relations" published quarterly during 1997, and devoted to promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships. The first issue of this volume reprints papers originally presented at a 1967 conference cosponsored by Project Public Information and Stanford University regarding the proper account of public education. These include: "A Conference-Public Understanding of Education as a Field of Study-1967" (Richard Gray and Dean O'Brien); "Educators Do Not Communicate Well" (Floyd Christian); and "What about Teachers?" (Albert Grey). Articles in the second issue include: "Parent Advocates Can Improve Parent-Teacher Relations" (Patricia Lindauer and others); "What Do Parents Think about Education Reform?"; and "Organize to Seek Out a Variety of Contributors" (Michael Miller). Articles in the third issue include: "The Subversion of Citizenship Education" (David Schimmel) and "A Relationship Challenge for Educators" (Judith Cochran). Articles in the fourth issue include: "The Power of Positive Students" (Joe Amato) and "Foundations--A Source of Alternative Funding" (Phillip Messner and Michael Graham). Each issue also contains a teaching or administrative case study and response, book reviews, and a short summary of a research project related to educational public relations. A new feature is initiated in the fourth issue in which communicators and teachers share insights regarding improvements in school-community relations. (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 423 981

The Journal of Educational Relations, 1997

Albert E. Holliday, Editor
Joan M. Holliday, Editor

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
● Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

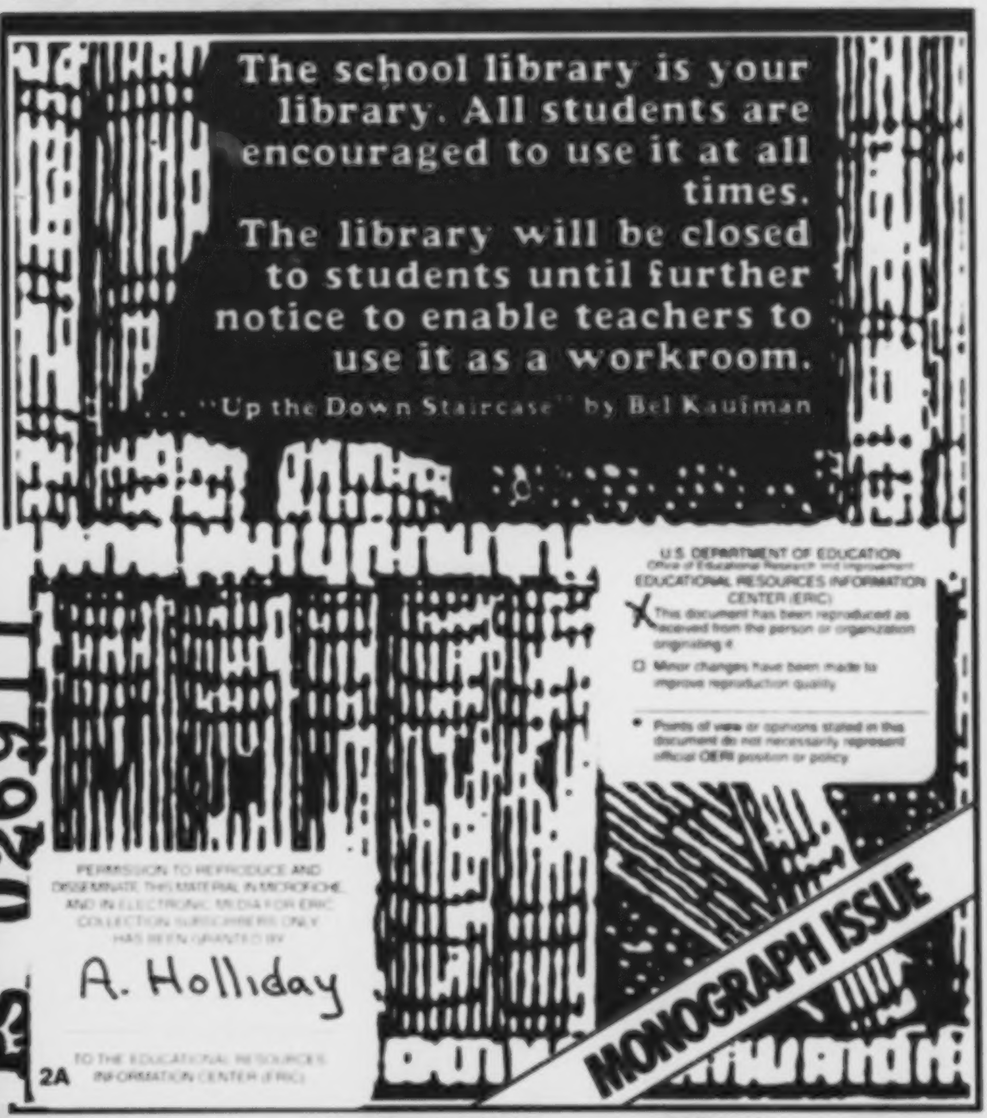
A. HOLLIDAY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

PS 026 911

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Journal of Educational RELATIONS



The school library is your library. All students are encouraged to use it at all times.
The library will be closed to students until further notice to enable teachers to use it as a workroom.

. . . "Up the Down Staircase" by Bel Kaufman

MONOGRAPH ISSUE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
A. Holliday
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
2A

PS 026911

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ☞ Vol. 18, No. 1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PPI PUBLISHES PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION AS A FIELD OF STUDY—1967

Project Public Information sponsored, with Stanford University, a national conference in 1967 to discuss what had been identified as "a lack of trained people to tell America's education story. The *Understanding as a Field of Study* report, which I edited as a PPI staff member, called attention to that great need and suggested how to meet the need.

Why This Reprint in 1997?

Observers of the national educators scene in 1997 fairly conclude that the proper account of public education—its success and challenges—is still not being conveyed to the public and major decision makers.

I suggest that you'll find most of the commentary and recommendations in the PPI publication as relevant today as they were 30 years ago. I see a useful purpose in presenting them again now.

Our Focus Now Is on Higher Education

Many concerns of the 1967 participants have been addressed adequately by NSPRA staff and members since then. NSPRA has published standards for specialists, adopted a code of ethics, developed an accredation program for members, and issued a wide variety of resource materials for specialists, administrators and boards.

Still lacking is a consistent approach in colleges and universities to the preparation of 1, prospective school-community relations specialists and 2, prospective administration, especially chief executive officers in the areas of educational communication and community relations.

We would like, yet in 1997, to identify the institutions that have developed model programs of preparation, learn of the states in which mandates, certification requirements or guidelines have been established for such training, and assemble examples of syllabuses for training of specialists and administrators. See pages 24 and 25 for our request for information.

Additional Copies of This Monograph Are Available

You may know of others who can assist in this project. Send me their names and addresses, and I will send a copy of this Monograph issue with an introductory letter.

Followups To Start Late in 1997

We will issue reports, in phases, in the Journal starting in late 1997. We urge your participation and encouragement of fellow communicators, administrators and higher education staffers.

Al Holliday
Editor-Publisher

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 18, No. 1
1st Quarter 1997

SPECIAL PPI REPORT

IFC **Editor's Column**

2 **The Origin of Project Public Information**

4 **A Conference—Public Understanding of Education as a Field of Study—1967.** The lack of trained people is a crucial problem. *By Richard Gray and Dean W. O'Brien*

8 **Educators Do Not Communicate Well**
To compete in the arena of public opinion, we must communicate effectively. *By Floyd T. Christian*

12 **Training School Administrators to Communicate**

14 **Training Educational Communicaton-School PR Specialists**

18 **What About Teachers?**
By Albert O. Grey

20 **What About the Education Reporter?**

24 **How Readers Can Respond**
Topics and questions we pose for readers' reaction.

26 **Participants in the 1967 Conference**

28 **Case Study**—The Superintendent's Principal Had No Principles. *By Ann Griffin.* **Case Study Response**—Making An Inside Move to Dismiss a Whole Nelson. *By Donna Alonzo*

34 **Research**—A Bilingual Parent/Teacher Hotline Improved an Inner-City Parochial School's Climate. *By Randall L. Turk*

36 **Contributor Guidelines**

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations—ISSN 0741-3653
Editor-in-chief Managing editor
Albert E. Holliday Joan M. Holliday

Book reviews-Arthur W. Steller Research/case studies-Philip T. West

The Journal of Educational Relations is published quarterly by the Educational Communication Center.
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657. Telephone 717-761-6620.

Copyright 1997.

Subscriptions: Individual rate, $48 per year. Single copy, $15. Library rate, $60 per year. Single copy, $20.
Add $4 for subscriptions outside of the United States. Payment in U.S. funds.
Periodicals postage paid at Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Journal of Educational Relations, Box 657, Camp Hill PA 17001-0657.

Project Public Information

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

USOE HELPED SDE PR 30 YEARS AGO

The Origin of PPI

by Albert E. Holliday

The U.S. Congress and the Johnson Administration were planning the scope of a massive program of federal aid to education in late 1964. Most of the new federal funds would be administered by state departments of education to local districts.

One of the legislation's planners suggested that some funds be allocated to assist state departments themselves, and Title V in the legislation was established.

As officials in the U.S. Office of Education were considering how to assist state departments, they learned of a study being conducted by graduate student Larry Ascough of West Virginia. Larry was examining the scope of information/communication programs in state departments of education and found that, while some had excellent programs (Oregon, Wisconsin, Washington, Florida, and Hawaii), most had minimal programs.

The Council of Chief State School Officers as well as USOE officials had stated the belief that research, public relations, consultant services and in-service education [are] "important functions of a state department of education."

Larry concluded that a SDE should play a prominent role in the development of public understanding of schools, and should offer leadership and training in public relations for educators at the local school level.

PPI's Purpose

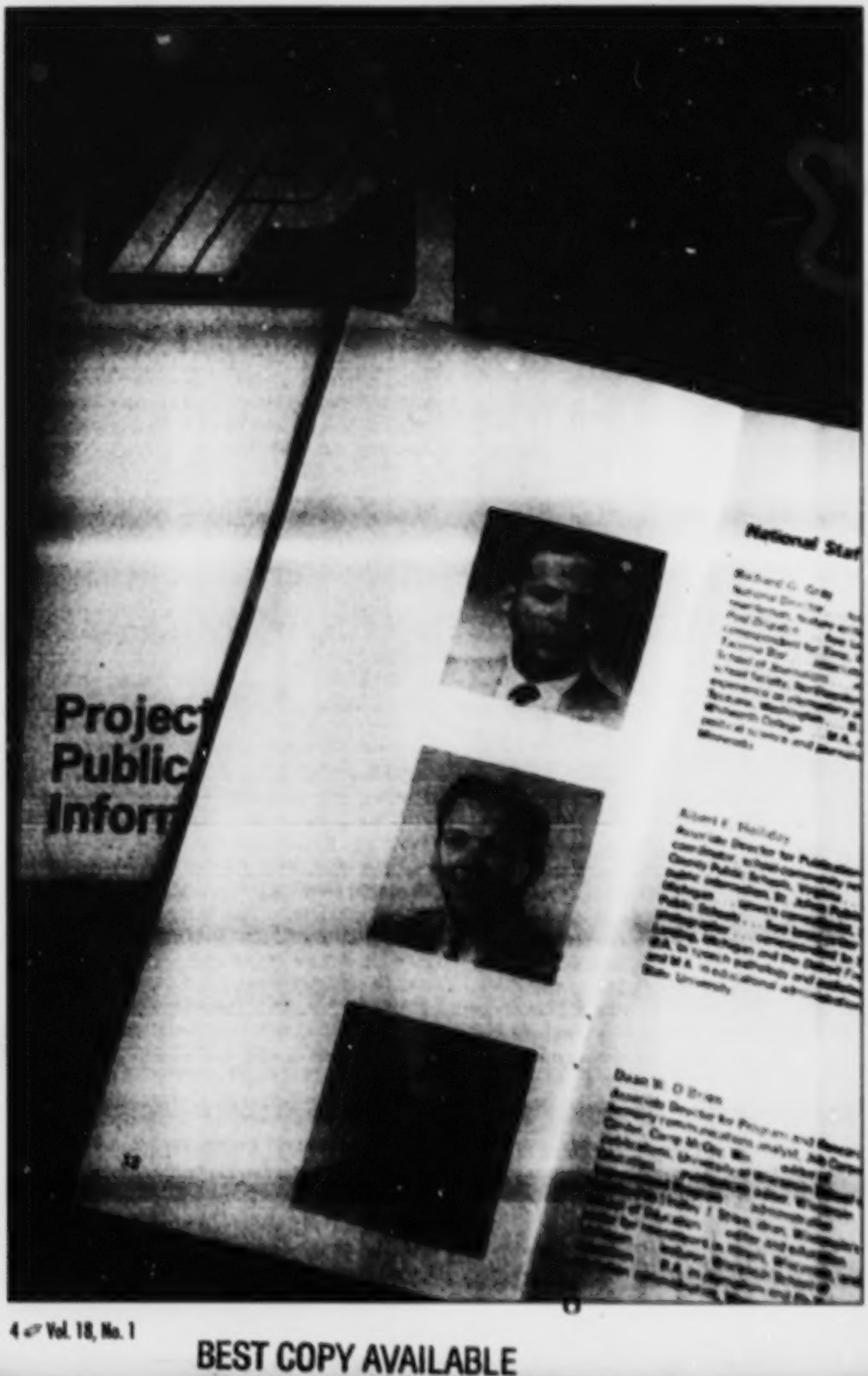
To do these tasks, the public information programs and services of SDEs had to be strengthened, and that was the stated purpose of what the USOE titled Project Public Information. The program was funded under the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and over its two-and-a-half year operation through the summer of 1968, $1.2 million was spent for and with SDEs.

PPI was administered by the CIOs of six SDEs (Wisconsin, New York, West Virginia, Florida, Washington and Hawaii), with headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. (Archie Buchmiller, deputy CEO for the Wisconsin SDE, was vice-president at large for the National School Public Relations Association; NSPRA officials had been instrumental in establishing PPI.)

Richard G. Gray, a member of the graduate school faculty at Northwestern University and a former reporter, was employed as the national director. The headquarters staff was to include two associate directors, one assistant director, four special assistants; four coordinators were located in Florida, New York, Washington and at Madison.

I was hired as an associate director for PPI's final year (1967-68) to be editor and producer of publications. I had been coordinator of school-community relations for Fairfax County, Va., Schools and previously was a speech clinician. After PPI, I was in charge of publications and information for the Pennsylvania D of E, and later formed my own consulting firm and started this Journal in 1975.

What follows is most of the copy in a PPI report that I edited after a conference on "public understanding" in late 1967 and that PPI published in early 1968.


Project
Public
Inform
National Staf

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A CONFERENCE—PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION AS A FIELD OF STUDY—1967

The Lack of Trained People Is A Crucial Problem

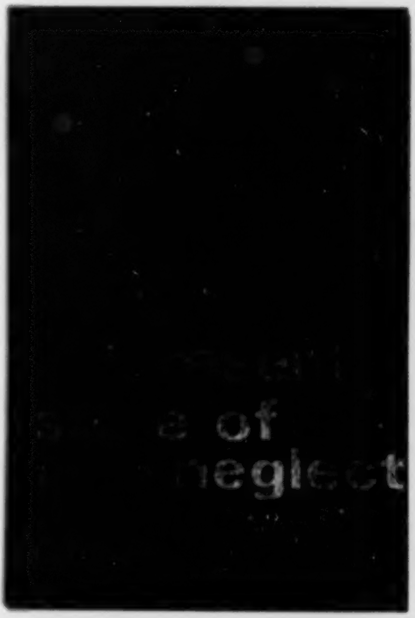
In the course of working with state departments of education for a year and a half, it has become apparent to Project Public Information staff members that one of the crucial problems facing education today is a lack of qualified personnel to tell the story of the nation's schools. This personnel shortage exists on many levels—not only among those who serve state departments and school systems as public information officers, but also among those who serve the news media.

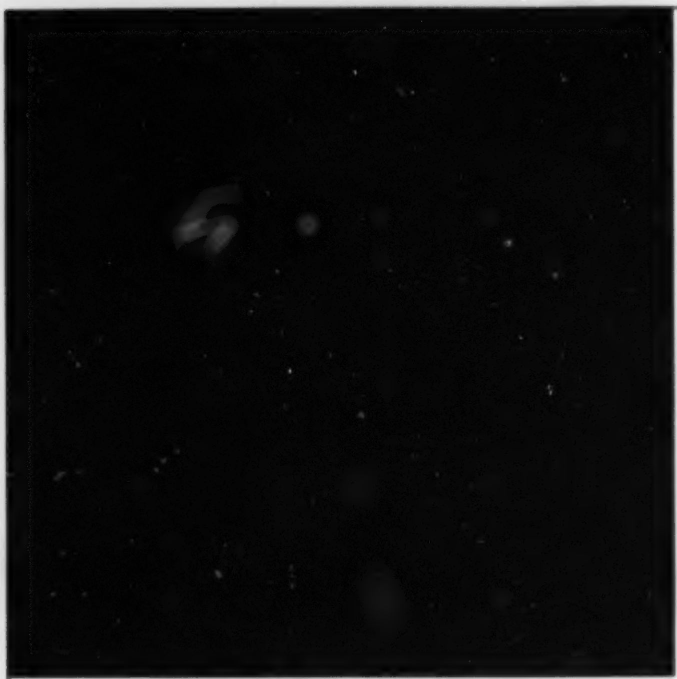
As chief state school officers joined with PPI to develop a better dialogue with the public, they began to say,"Yes, we believe in this, but where do we go to get qualified people?" And we have been hard pressed to make recommendations.

Lindley Stiles has done an excellent job of helping us understand why. In his publication, *The Present State of Neglect*, published by PPI in November 1967, he reports that only seven of the 131 institutions he surveyed were preparing educational public information specialists.

Dean Stiles' study also indicates that few educational administrators have been prepared for the difficult job of maintaining good relations with the public, he found that only 60 of the 131 institutions were making any effort to acquaint prospective school administrators with the field of public information.

Because of the implications of Dean Stiles' study, Project Public Information, in cooperation with Stanford University, sponsored a con-





ference on November 30 and December 1, 1967. College and university deans of education and of journalism, public school administrators, state department of education administrators, and representatives of the media met in Palo Alto, California, to examine public understanding of education as a field of graduate study.

Three Basic Assumptions to Consider

At the outset of the conference, we made three assumptions basic to an examination of educational communication.

First, we think that public education is vital to American society; democracy cannot work without an enlightened electorate. Fortunately, our schools have traditionally succeeded in preparing the public for the responsibilities required of a self-governing people.

Second, we feel that public understanding of education and educational understanding of the public are essential if schools are to continue meeting the needs of society.

Third, we feel that public understanding of education is not what it ought to be.

Animosity Between Educators and the Public Is Growing

There appears to be considerable evidence for this third assumption. For example, animosity between educational administrators and the general public seems to be growing. The two groups increasingly disagree over the quality of the schools, the relevance of the education offered, the ways to solve financial crises, the equality of educational opportunities for minority groups.

The media, generally, do not do as well as they should in helping the public understand education. Too many media representatives treat education as bulletin-board or crisis journalism, in much the same way as the cover ladies' clubs or the latest city hall scandal.

Moreover, educators themselves have done relatively little to bridge the information gap. The quality and quantity of educational communications, both internal and external, are minimal in most school systems in the country.

First two assumptions—that education is vital to the democratic process and that mutual understanding between education and its publics is needed if education is to grow—provided the foundation of the Palo Alto conference. The third assumption—that public understanding of education today is not what is should be—was the focal point of the conference.

Questions That Require Our Attention

During the course of the conference, we were anxious to get reactions to a number

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

of questions. Why, for instance, has the public-educator love affair soured in many sections of the nation? Why don't educators communicate better? Why do the news media focus more attention on crisis than on curriculum? Should schools employ public information specialists? What skills and talents should these specialists posses? What kinds of research are needed? How can we increase the educational administrator's commitment to public communication? How can competent education reporters be trained? And how can colleges and universities be stimulated to initiate new school public information programs?

We did not get all of the questions answered at this conference. In some cases, new questions were raised by participants. But the general feeling of the 50 conference participants was that there is a definite need for new college and university training programs in communication for educational administrators and school public information specialists, and that greater quality and quantity of communication among educators, citizens, and media representatives can result in the improvement of American education.

Richard G. Gray
Dean W. O'Brien

(Richard G. Gray was the national director, and Dean W. O'Brien was an associate director of Project Public Information.)

What's the Climate for the 1990s and Beyond?

Gordon McCloskey, education professor at Washington State University, forecast the communication climate we can anticipate in the next several decades. He suggested we should assume:

1. That free speech and government by freely elected representatives will continue;

2. That the task of creating and maintaining public understanding and interest will grow more complex;

3. That public and private costs of education will continue to rise, and probably more rapidly than costs for other services and products;

4. That local and county governments and school districts will continue to become more interrelated;

5. That finances available for education will increase;

6. That the public desire for more adequate educational services can be activated through modern communication; and

7. That a potential for expansion of public concern and controversy exists, and how educators nurture this potential will determine whether educational development will be retarded or stimulated.

McCloskey implied, by his selection of factors, that educators cannot expect a status quo situation—they must hop on the bandwagon or see progress bypass them.

EDUCATORS DO NOT COMMUNICATE WELL—

Five characteristics of educators that inhibit productive relations with their publics

by Floyd T. Christian, Florida Superintendent of Public Instruction

We educators are victims of our own success and this success has come back to plague us. We have claimed that for a democracy to survive and for our people to remain free, we must teach everybody to read and write. We wanted them to be able to think and understand, to argue intelligently and still retain an appreciation for practical compromise, to ask meaningful questions and not be satisfied with superficial answers.

We have accomplished this with surprising success. And this success has come back to haunt us.

The people learned to read. And they learned to listen. So they read books that claim that Johnny can't read and listen to speeches that suggest that schools have failed in everything. They learned to write and so they write letters to the editor complaining about 'the waste and frills' in education and ask 'why don't we return to the good old days?' and 'why aren't our children getting a good education?'

We were so proud of our success that we were totally unprepared for this sudden but widespread criticism.

While trying to retain our composure, we comforted each other by reviewing the progress we had made in recent years. We admitted that our educational system wasn't perfect, but we continued to be puzzled by what we considered unwarranted attacks by an uninformed minority.

Criticism Gained Momentum

However, much to our surprise, the criticism gained momentum. Educators then looked at each other with increased concern and began searching for answers to this accelerating dissatisfaction with our educational system.

In a systematic effort to find out where, when and how we had lost public support and understanding, we retraced our steps to the 'good old days' when the college professor, the county superintendent, the local principal and the classroom teacher enjoyed considerable status in the community, when educators used to enjoy the same image as the family doctor.

We remember with considerable pride that our decisions were not questioned and our judgment was respected. We told parents not to worry about their children's education and assured them we would handle this simple and relatively inexpensive responsibility. We only asked that they accept—and pay for—a time-proved academic prescription. Since it was the same prescription they had taken as children, they faithfully paid the bills and continued to respect our judgment.

However, educators gradually recognized the need to change the ingredients in this popular prescription and for various reasons education became more expensive. Since the pubic had accepted our wisdom in the past we

felt no obligation to explain the new ingredients or justify changing the prescription. After all, we rationalized, they are not professionally trained to appreciate the advantages of these changes so let's not confuse them.

This was our first mistake. And it proved to be a costly one.

We changed the curriculum. We added a considerable number of nonteaching personnel to the budget to assure the success of the new ingredients. New positions like those of guidance counselors, teaching consultants, audio-visual experts, social workers and school psychiatrists were created.

As the burden of increasing costs grew heavier and children began embarrassing their parents by asking for assistance in solving the new math, these heretofore passive parents sat up and took a new look at education. Suddenly they recognized that we had changed the prescription.

An Internal Revolution Rumbles

But our troubles had only begun. While we were recovering from the avalanche of hostile inquiries by parents, we began hearing rumblings of an internal revolution. The teachers who had been obediently passing out our academic medicine for years suddenly spoke up and told us they wanted to be included in any plans to change the ingredients of all future prescriptions. The crowing blow came when the students, who had been taking the prescription for years without protest, abruptly decided it didn't taste good any more.

Then it finally dawned on us. We were living in the past as we tried to prepare for the future. For as long as we could remember, parents had left education to the educators, teachers had passively accepted their assigned duties and students had objected to nothing other than excessive homework.

Unfortunately, many administrative educators believed they could retain their position in this harmonious relationship while changing the responsibilities, roles, habits and activi-

---

Educators, more than anyone else, should realize the key to implementing change is effective communications.

---

ties of everyone else.

The criticism we now face erupted when we began making changes in our traditional education system without preparing our three most important audiences for these changes. I refer to the parents who were expected to financially support the changes, the teachers who were expected to implement the changes and the students who were expected to experience these changes.

We Forgot the Key To Change is Communication

We committed a monumental blunder by failing to recognize the nature of change. Change represents different things to different people. Some view it with suspicion and greet it with resistance. Others recognize it as an escape from an unacceptable status quo.

Educators, more than anyone else, should realize the key to implementing change is effective communications. In essence, we failed to gain support for the changes we championed because we did not communicate effectively with those who must support these changes.

As difficult as it is for me to admit, our professional characteristics are a handicap to effective communications. The experiences, attitudes and habits of professional educators do not lend themselves to a free exchange of ideas and information with their three most important audiences.

Five Reasons Why Educators Communicate Poorly

I think I can identify five characteristics of professionals educators that support my reluctant conclusion that we are poor communicators.

First, educators have a false impression about their ability to communicate. This is easy to understand. We all recognize that education is primarily a communications experience—a process for passing knowledge from one generation to another—but many of us assume we are communicators by the mere fact that we are educators. Naturally, we find it difficult to even consider the possibility that we are not capable of gaining support for new ideas and new programs. Our first impulse is to reject the idea that we are not effective communicators.

But many of us fail to realize that communications is not concluded when knowledge is disseminated. This is only one-third of the process. Communications involves disseminating information, getting a response and evaluating that response.

Second, educators are not accustomed to competing for people's attention. If any group has ever been provided a captive audience,

educators have. Students of all ages come to our schools, colleges and universities seeking knowledge and guidance. In many instances, the desire to hear our message is so great we are forced to limit the size of our audiences. Frequently, we establish high standards to discourage many who want to hear us but have not achieved academic excellence.

We have enjoyed the luxury of sitting back and waiting for our publics to come to us for so long that we are reluctant to take the initiative and advance an idea in the face of competing voices. Many veteran educators find it distasteful to enter the public arena and challenge special interest groups for the right to be heard.

Third, many educators operated in obscurity for so many years that they were completely unprepared for the public's recent but accelerating interest in their activities. They consider it inappropriate that their activities should be held up for public scrutiny.

Fourth, educators have such a high regard for their colleagues' professional ability that they unconsciously minimize the value of outside opinion. All too frequently, we make decisions based entirely on the judgment of those within our academic circles.

The ***fifth*** characteristic of a professional educator that inhibits effective communication is one that requires our immediate attention. I refer to the regrettable fact that most professional educators—particularly those in administrative positions—have little communication experience and almost no meaningful communications training.

During the five to seven years that we train for positions of leadership, only a few of us have ever been exposed to a basic course in communications. We earn our degrees, step into positions of leadership, and begin a battle of survival without adequate preparation in the all-important area of communications.

The Task at Hand

We no longer have a choice of deciding if we will communicate...For us to compete in the arena of public opinion, we must initiate programs that will prepare us to communicate effectively.

We have the resources and talent necessary to produce communication-conscious educators. We must commit these resources and talent to the task of developing adequate higher education programs across North America.

Lindley Stiles, Northwestern University

We have needs for three kinds of training: one, for school administrators for orientation in communication; two, for educator specialists in public information; and, three, for media specialists in education.

TRAINING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS TO COMMUNICATE

Floyd Christian says that "To fulfill our responsibility to the American public and at the same time maintain our leadership role in education, we must (1) provide communications training for prospective education administrators and (2) employ knowledgeable communications specialists to help us accurately reflect our problems, activities and goals."

Stanley Elam says that, "Communications theory is a new discipline, advanced beyond the seat-of-the-pants stage only within the past 25 years by such men as Norbert Weiner, Wilbur Schramm, Bernard Berelson, and Carl Hovland. I don't propose that all school administrators study communications theory in great depth, but certainly all of them need to absorb basic communication concepts, for example, those summarized by Gordon McCloskey in his book on *Education and Public Understanding*. Beyond this, the crying need is for every major school district to find or train a superintendent who knows how to put these principles to work in a school system. A superintendent and staff should know how to develop lines of communication between and among the school and all the publics with which the school is concerned."

The question, then, is how?

Conference participants met in a number of discussion groups to consider various aspects of training. Group I considered programs for school administrators such as superintendents and principals and proposed a number of needs which training programs should fulfill. This group suggested that educators need to develop:

1. Appreciation for the right of people to know and to participate.
2. An understanding of their need to communicate.
3. An understanding of audiences or publics with whom they need to communicate.
4. An awareness of communication channels, strategies and techniques.
5. An awareness of what needs to be communicated.
6. A sensitivity toward future social issues, forces and trends that have implications for public education.
7. Understanding of two-way communication channels.
8. A will to secure feedback, and then obtain it, analyze it and use it.
9. Comprehension of possible services communications specialists can provide.
10. Personal competence in one specific vital area of communication—oral presentations before live audiences, television, or radio and film.

Group I recognized that no single discipline could satisfy these needs, and suggested that an interdisciplinary approach be used at all levels—undergraduate, master's, Ph.D.—as well as workshops, conferences, internships, and other activities stressing the fact that "communication skills are learned through doing."

Lloyd Isaacs, North Carolina Education Association

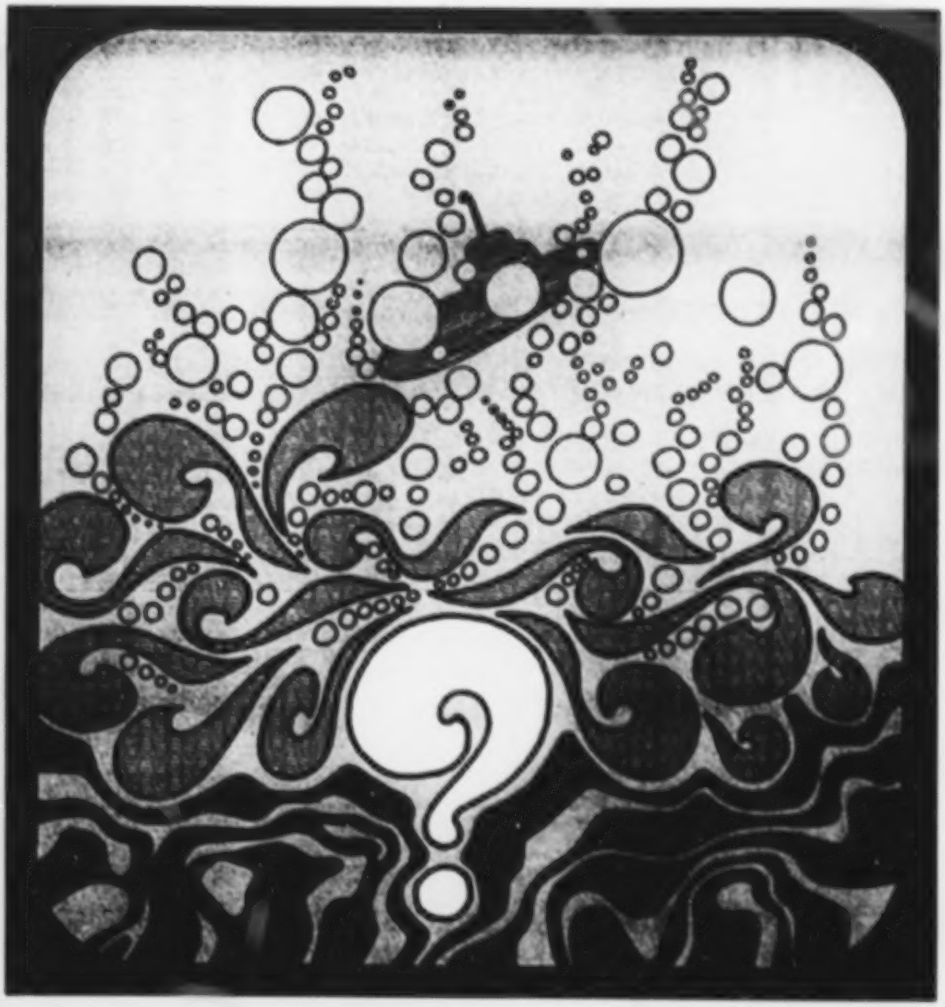
I think the book *The Present State of Neglect* is excellent, and I am using it as a springboard for a series of state-wide meeting in cooperation with the University of North Carolina School of Journalism and this area's Regional Educational Laboratory.

Louis Ingelhart, Ball State University

Virtually all administrative people in schools should be inculcated with two understandings. Maybe the most important one is an understanding of the role of society's mass media. Then they need an understanding of public relations—that public relations is not just an information-giving operation but information giving and receiving in an effort to align the structure of the institution with the needs and demands of our society.

"To get rid of submarines? Boil the ocean. How you boil the ocean is your problem."

... Mark Twain



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TRAINING EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION—SCHOOL PR SPECIALISTS

Another group of Palo Alto conference participants addressed itself to the training of school communication specialists and came up with the following suggestions. Such specialists, in addition to possessing skills essential for the several educators, should:

1. **Occupy a high-level position as a member of the administrative team.**
2. **Serve as a primary contact with the community to describe educational programs and trends and serve as an interpreter of public reaction and opinion.**
3. **Be well-versed in social analytical tools so that they can scientifically measure public opinion and knowledge about education.**

McCloskey believes information specialists must possess a number of "operational capabilities" such as:

1. **Thorough understanding of educational services, objectives, processes and potentials.**
2. **Ability to identify relationships between education and other human needs and wants.**
3. **Comprehension of social conditions and trends.**
4. **Familiarization with political structures and decision-making processes.**
5. **Comprehension of ethical public relations operation.**
6. **Understanding of how people respond to communication messages.**
7. **Knowledge of how people change their opinions and attitudes.**
8. **Awareness of how perception affects acceptance or rejection of new facts and ideas.**
9. **Comprehension of the function of reward and threat in message content.**
10. **Awareness of the nature of rumor.**
11. **Ability to work cooperatively with teachers, education leaders, community leaders, mass media personnel and others.**
12. **Knowledge of how leadership can be developed in others.**
13. **Comprehension of how civic and advisory groups can be effectively used.**
14. **Understanding of how the media functions.**
15. **Ability to code messages to attract attention, arouse interest and evoke action.**

Scott Cutlip, University of Wisconsin

An idea has been tossed around that I'd sure like to knock down. That is the idea that school boards or state departments of education should go out and hire a public relations consulting firm or agency. Most of the advertising firms I know about have very little comprehension of education. What is needed is to develop first-rate educational public relations personnel.

The starting point for a good educational public relations program is the chief school executive. Public relations must come from the top. You've got to bring today's superintendents and principals back to school for inservice or refresher programs to convince them that public relations in this day and age is essential.

Malcolm MacLean, Jr., Director, School of Journalism, University if Iowa

We are planning to hold a number of meetings soon to examine the kinds of programs that would be best for training high level educational communicators. We have very good relations with representatives of our college of education and will be working together with them. I think in the next two or three years we should have a full program in operation.

Gordon McCloskey, Washington State University

We are planning a graduate school minor in our department of communication to give students experience with press, radio, and television. We are making plants to enlarge the behavioral science aspect of our administrative training program as we believe the social and behavioral sciences can help administrators make better decisions regarding business communication. And we are considering combining a number or our existing communication courses into large integrated blocks on a working seminar basis.

Charles Duncan, dean of faculties at the University of Oregon, believes that before getting down to the hammer-and-nails questions of course work, a number of questions merit serious consideration:

1. What should be the terminal degree for a graduate program in educational communication—master's or doctor's?

2. Where in the university should the program be centered—the school of journalism? Education? Both?

3. Which would be most desirable as an academic undergraduate background for candidates—a journalism major? Education? Other?

4. Given the identification of certain courses or major fields as desirable background, would they be required or merely preferred?

5. What about non-academic background? Should professional experience of some kind be a prerequisite? If so, what kind? Journalistic? Teaching? Public relations? And how much?

6. How would you identify or describe the degree-holder: As a journalist with special training in education, or as an educator with

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I. W. Cole, Medill School of Journalism

I tend to agree with the assumption that if the public knows what's going on in education, the public will approve and support it. But there is a possibility that at least some educators and journalists hold to the idea that if the public could understand what's going on in education, the public would not support educators.

Samuel Goldman, Chairman, School of Education, Syracuse University

Syracuse University has developed a minor program in school community relations in the school of education. The four doctoral candidates now in the program have developed their minors from courses such as communications theory, research in communications, government publicity and information, relations workshops and seminars.

special training in journalistic knowledge and skills? And what about titles: Education Information Specialist? Educational Publicist?

7. After the degree, what? This is a question of utmost importance, one that should be looked into as carefully and candidly—and as early—as possible. What would be the employment opportunities for the graduates? Who would hire them? School Districts? State departments of education? Newspapers and other media? Could they go out and "set up in business on their own" as consultants, beholden to no agency, institution or employer?

8. Another bedrock question: Where and how would candidates for this program be recruited? With what immediate incentive would they be attracted?

9. As for long-range incentives, this gets to the question of career opportunities. Would the kind of work the graduates enter be sufficiently rewarding and challenging to constitute a career in itself, or would it more likely be a stepping stone to something else?

One University's Reaction

by Louis E. Ingelhart, Chairman of Journalism Instruction, Ball State University

Arrangements are under consideration at Ball State University to establish a master's degree major in educational public relations.

The PPI-Stanford conference provided an impetus to outline a master's degree major in educational public relations, which will follow in general the advice and viewpoints expressed at the conference by several participants. It probably will take most of the current academic year to polish the structure of the program. Nevertheless, the staffs of the journalism section and the department of speech and journalism in cooperation with the Teachers College hope to offer such a program to graduate students in the near future. We have found the Stiles report to be helpful in discussing educational public relations educational needs and we probably will need to refer to the report several times before our program is adopted.

It appears now that the Ball State program will consist of about 16 quarter hours of basic required courses in public relations taught either in the journalism area or in Teachers College departments. An additional 8 to 16 hours of directed elective courses will be indicated so that some of the broader areas mentioned during the Stanford conference can be accommodated. Thus, the major will consist of from 24 to 32 hours leaving a margin of 13 quarter hours for undirected electives. The problem will be to find sufficient funds to strengthen the teaching faculty for the program.

The work and influence of Project Public Information is such that is has been tremendously helpful in clarifying our thinking, encouraging us to proceed and focusing our attention on the planned programs.

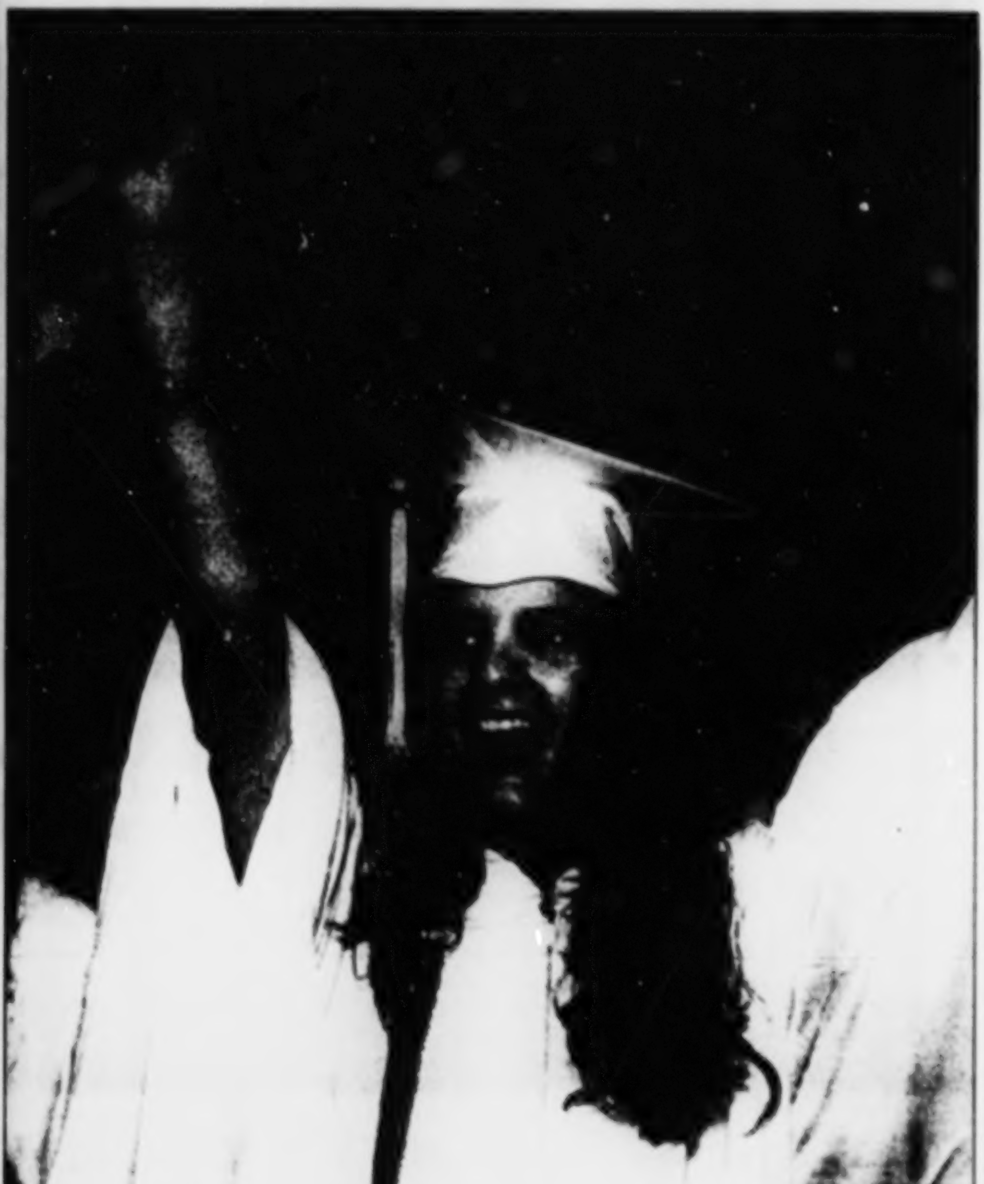


Photo by Geri Kodey, Clark County Schools, Nevada

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WHAT ABOUT TEACHERS?

by Albert O. Grey, Chairman,
Department of Journalism,
Whitworth College

Development of education-communication curricula for the training of school information officers is of primary and immediate concern. However, the problem of school-society communication and understanding obviously goes beyond the turning out of such professionals. Viewing school-society communication broadly, we see lower echelon problems that might be solved by a second category of cooperative programs of education and journalism. In fact, it may even be that programs of the second category are necessary for the full functioning of professional school public information officers.

Among problem areas implied in the above statements are the following:

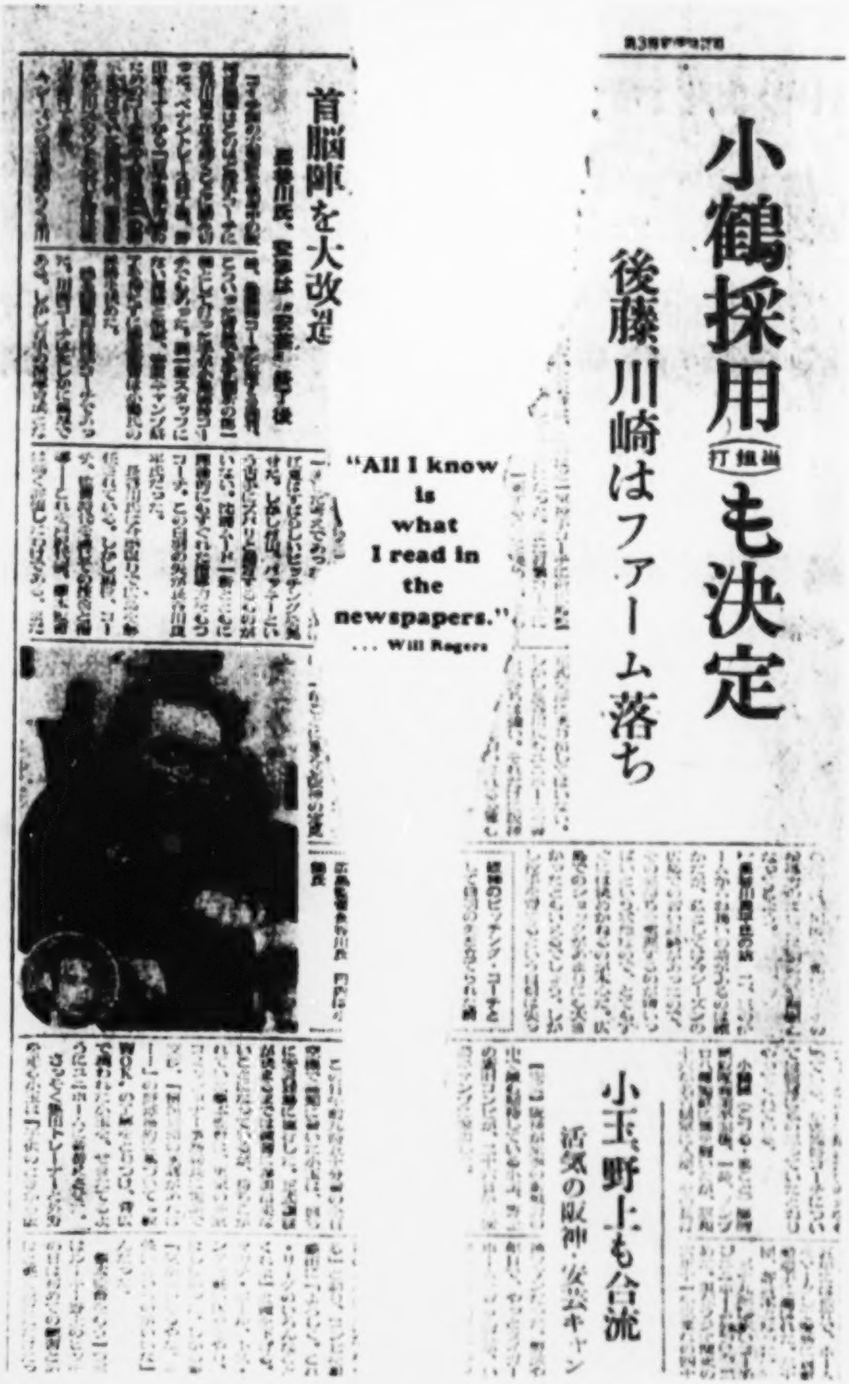
1. **Teacher communication in the classroom.**
2. **The teacher in the role as communicator beyond subject matter and the classroom (i.e., the teacher vis-a-vis parents and the community).**
3. **Communication problems of the principal within school and with external publics.**
4. **The principal's role with respect to the in-service training of teachers in communication and interpretation techniques.**
5. **Student publication as vehicles of communication with home and community.**

These problems suggest the following methods of attack:

1. **In every type on institution of higher education, journalism and education should develop communication courses for prospective teachers. English composition and literature courses generally do not give the needed training and orientation. Such courses should be taken by prospective teachers of every discipline.**
2. **Graduate programs in education, including those for administrative credentials, should require courses in public relations and advanced communication.**
3. **Graduate advisors in education should explore and publicize the possibilities of thesis topics dealing with classroom communication, school public relations, and school public information.**
4. **In-service workshops and seminars in communication and public information are flexible ways to develop the needed orientation among working teachers at all levels.**
5. **Prospective English teachers should receive training in journalism as part of their undergraduate program. In areas where journalism training is not required or encouraged, publication advising is in a deplorable state and student publications are much less than they could be.**
6. **Annual workshops for teachers and school publication staff members are excellent service projects for all types of colleges and universities.**
7. **Exploration of more effective use of educational television as an interpretive tool of education is needed.**

Large universities naturally are in a much better position to train professional public information officers. That job should be left to those universities. The smaller institutions, including small liberal arts colleges, should be able to develop cooperative programs of education and journalism relating more directly to the classroom teacher and the principal.

As private colleges produce upwards of 30 per cent of the new teachers and in most instances grant principals' credentials, it seem imperative that such colleges should develop cooperative programs. There is no reason why the smaller college can not mobilize its own resources and those of its community and enter any one or all of the seven areas mentioned above.



小鶴採用（打撃当）も決定

後藤、川崎はファーム落ち

首脳陣を大改造

小玉、野上も合流

活気の阪神・安芸キャンプ

"All I know is what I read in the newspapers."

... Will Rogers

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WANTED:

Education reporters who

- Look at all data
- See the whole picture
- Know rules of ethics

What About the Education Reporter?

An analysis of needs for undergraduate and graduate training school programs for educational communication would be incomplete without attention to an agent of communication between school and community—the education reporter.

Not only does this person affect the local educational communication climate, and thus, as conference speakers have indicated, is an important factor for school administrators and public information specialists to consider, but the education reporter has to be trained for the job too.

Directing his attention to needs in this area, Peter Janssen told conference participants that the current trend in newspaper and print-media education reporting is toward specialization—assignment of reporters to the education beat full-time.

However, two problems exist, says Janssen, and they directly influence training programs for education reporters. Specialization is often more hope than reality and the selection of such specialists is often haphazard at best.

Add to these problems the fact that "few education writers have been trained as education writers. Most come from liberal arts and broad journalism backgrounds.

"My experience is typical," says Janssen. "As an undergraduate history major I took two or three journalism courses and was bored to death, although I did enroll in in exciting summer program which involved working at television stations in a nearby city. I did get a master's degree in journalism, however, as a profes-

G.K. Hodenfield, Education Writers Association

When you speak of education being reported only in terms of crises, I think you're overlooking one major fact of newspaper life in this country. The front page in American newspapers is the crisis page and when you see education mentioned on the front page, the story being covered really isn't education but a story of a crisis. Most of today's good education reporting won't be found on the front page— it's back in the paper. And don't assume people only look at the front pages.

Donald McCarty, University of Wisconsin

We need professional education reporters who know rule of ethics—that is, who have learned how to look at all the data and see the whole picture. If educators are going to tell the truth, certain things will be said which could do great damage to an organization if not reported correctly.

Peter Janssen, Newsweek

The press and the schools have deep conflicts. A basic drive of the press is to be competitive, to be first with the most. This drive for instant information—or instant action—will continue regardless of any cooperative educational programs; it's the very nature of the beast.

sional degree. Even there, the greatest value was outside the classroom, working full-time one quarter for a local wire service in Chicago covering everything from the Cook County morgue to city hall and federal courts. I think such first-hand experience is terribly valuable to a journalism student. I was then hired as a general assignment reporter in Philadelphia, covering everything there for about two years. I also think my experience was typical when I started covering education in Philadelphia. I had no training, no directives, not even a list of telephone numbers."

However, Janssen believes that "most reporters, while welcoming more initial direction and help than they now receive, would not want specific education training to prepare for an education beat. To be useful to our readers, to maintain the watchdog function of the press, we need a broad understanding of social and political problems. To a large degree, we need a detached, outsider's view of our specialty.

"Good education reporters, I think, are above all good journalists preparing for their subject in the same manner as they would prepare for any other subject. Certainly, they need help at first—but much of their training will come as they read, cover meetings and interview the personalities involved in their field. After six months, good education reporters should be as familiar as the superintendent of schools about school policies. They should be more familiar than the superintendent with school problems, since they should be touching many more bases. Really good reporters should be familiar with solutions to those problems—gained through their own exposure and through a process of self-education. I think

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Phyllis Wiener, National Committee for Support of Public Schools

I'd like to tell you about the time I went to our school board to ask for some really important things like increased library facilities, better counseling space, and a number or other things. I mentioned in passing that if they were going to do some renovation at a particular high school, they might think of installing a ladies' room on the second floor where there was none. So the local paper's headline to this story read "Civic Worker Wants More Teacher Toilets."

Richard Gray, PPI

We have been asked to accept the fact that most education writers will not be covering education for the rest of their lives. But can't we develop some kind of training program that would prepare people to say, "This is worth dedicating my life to. I don't want to move up to the city editor—it is enough for me to be the best education writer in the country and help solve some of the crucial problems before us."

Cynthia Parsons, Christian Science Monitor

If you have a concern for good education reporting, it may be that you should not go to the reporter but to the city editor, the one who makes the assignments. I think it would behoove school of education and journalism to run seminars for city editors, to teach them what education reporting is.

the process of informing the public about school affairs would not be greatly improved by creating education courses for education writers."

Janssen's opinion was amplified by a number of conference participants in Group III assigned to the area of training education reporters. The group stated:

1. We believe that future education writers should have a broad, rather than a specialized, undergraduate education; an education designed to develop abilities to think, probe, and communicate clearly. Specialization should come in graduate schools in areas of students' major interests.

2. We believe that print and electronic media should cooperate with higher education institutions to provide internship programs so that undergraduate students can obtain experience in education reporting.

3. We believe there is a clear need for publishers and radio-television station and network managers to support programs of continuing education with colleges, universities, and other institutions to strengthen the professional competence of education writers. These programs could include special topic seminars, workshops, and short courses.

WHAT READERS CAN DO IN 1997

We request the participation of *Journal* readers to provide information in seven areas and/or respond to three questions.

Your response can be a report of ongoing or planned work or an opinion piece about your approach or suggestions in an area. You can respond to one or all of the topics.

Responses will be used to compile status reports that can be used in 1998 to stimulate action at various levels across North America.

Overview and/or description of higher education programs for advanced degrees for specialists or other administrators (current or planned).

Send to:
Don Gallagher
1511 Alison Dr.
West Chester, PA 19380

Description of a model program of school-community relations. Specify nature of the community (large urban, small suburban, midsize city, rural, etc.), staffing, budget, activities and purposes, divided by internal and external audiences.

Send to:
Al Holliday, *Journal* editor
1830 Walnut St.
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Mandates or guidelines of state department or state board of education regarding requirements (coursework) in the school-community relations area for certification as a chief school administrator and/or communication specialist.

Send to:
Brenda Williams
School of Education
College of William and Mary
P.O. Box 8795
Williamsburg, VA 23187

A syllabus for specific university courses in school-community relations for chief administrators and/or specialists.

Send to:
Rick Kaufman

Sheboygan Schools
830 Virginia Ave.
Sheboyban, WI 53081

■ Guidelines issued by a state department of education for local school district communications programs (staffing, activities, budget recommendations).

Send to:
Jim Lee
6016 Oakland Ave.
Minneapolis MN 55417

■ Overview of a current state department of education department of communication as it relates to the public and local districts' communication programs (specify purposes, staffing, activities, budget).

Send to:
Jim Lee
6016 Oakland Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55417

■ Suggestions or comments as to the personal competencies necessary to be a specialist in school-community relations (training, experiences, abilities).

Send to:
Rich Bagin, Ex. Dir.
National School Public
Relations Assoc.
15948 Derwood Rd.
Rockville, MD 20855

In addition to these areas, we seek reaction to three questions:

1. Are mandates at the state regulatory level the best approach to be sure proper university training is provided in the school-community relations area for school administration?

2. Because of the wide variety of teacher training structures in thousands of institutions, what would be possible methods to ensure that prospective teachers have understandings of the scope of school-community relations?

3. The U.S. Office of Education could fund a new activity similar to Project Public Information of 1965-68. The purpose would be to strengthen SDE communication efforts and enable SEDE staff members to assist district administrators develop their own communication programs. Would you favor such an activity?

Send your responses to these three questions to Al Holliday, Journal editor. **Note that I would like to hear from you by July 15, 1997, with your response or intention to participate.**

Albert E. Holliday
***Journal* Editor**

PARTICIPANTS IN THE 1967 CONFERENCE

Max G. Abbott, Deputy Director
Center for the Advanced Study of
Educational Administration
University of Oregon

Lewis Applegate
Director of Public Relations
New Jersey Education Association

Miss Eva Aronfreed, Professor
Social Studies Department
Glassboro State College

Miss Dorothee Brown
Public Information Officer
Washington State Department of
Public Instruction

Wayne Carle
Assistant State Superintendent
Ohio Department of Education

Richard Carter, Professor
School of Communication
University of Washington

B.J. Chandler, Dean
School of Education
Northwestern University

Floyd T. Christian
Superintendent of Public
Instruction
Florida State Department of
Education

Godwin Chu, Visiting Assistant
Professor
Institute for Communication
Research
Stanford University

Wesley Clark, Dean
School of Journalism
Syracuse University

Aaron Cohodes, Editor
Nation's Schools

I.W. Cole, Dean
Medill School of Journalism
Northwestern University

Scott M. Cutlip, Professor
School of Journalism
University of Wisconsin

Mrs. Virginia Cutter
Program Director, Information
Services
Office of Planning
Texas Education Agency

Joseph L. Davis
Assistant Superintendent
Special Services
Columbus Public Schools, Ohio

Charles T. Duncan
Dean of Faculties
University of Oregon

Stanley Elam, Editor
Phi Delta Kappan

Jack W. Ewan, Professor
School of Journalism
University of Oregon

Edgar Fuller, Executive Secretary
Council of Chief State School
Officers
Robert N. Funk, Assistant Dean
School of Education
Stanford University

Samuel Goldman, Chairman
School of Education
Syracuse University

Alfred O. Gray, Chairman
Department of Journalism
Whitworth College

Richard G. Gray
National Director
Project Public Information

David L. Grey, Assistant Professor
Department of Communication
Stanford University

A. Ben Groce, Coordinator
Information Office
Tennessee State Department of
Education

Kenneth H. Hansen
Director of Program Development
Education Commission of the
States

Carroll Hanson, Director
Publications & Information
Department
Seattle Public Schools, Washington

G.K. Hodenfield, Executive
Director
Education Writers Association

Albert E. Holliday
Associate Director
Project Public Information

Thomas D. Horn, Professor
College of Education
University of Texas

Francis A.J. Ianni, Director
Division of Educational
Institutions & Programs
Teachers College
Columbia University

Louis E. Ingelhart, Professor
Department of Speech and
Journalism
Ball State University

H. Thomas James, Dean
School of Education
Stanford University

Peter A. Janssen, Associate Editor
for Education
Newsweek Magazine

Malcolm MacLean, Jr., Director
School of Journalism
University of Iowa

Donald J. McCarty, Dean
School of Education
University of Wisconsin

Gordon McCloskey, Professor
Department of Education
Washington State University

Richard Magat, Director
Office of Reports
Ford Foundation

J. Stanley Marshall, Dean
College of Education
Florida State University

Raymond Morton, Director
Public Information Office
South Carolina State Department
of Education

Robert Mott, Chairman
Department of Communications
Washington State University

Lawrence Murphy, Assistant
Director
Public Information Region IX
U.S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare

Dean W. O'Brien
Associate Director
Project Public Information

Miss Cynthia Parsons
Editorial Department
The Christian Science Monitor

H.B. Powell, Director
Information & Publications
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Wilmott Ragsdale, Director
Specialized Reporting Program
School of Journalism
University of Wisconsin

Alan Scott, Director
Public Relations Program
School of Communication
University of Texas

Howard Spergle
Education Reporter
WGBH-TV, Boston
Lindley J. Stiles, Professor
School of Education
Northwestern University

William Strand, Professor
School of Education
Stanford University

Eugene Tackowiak
Public Information Officer
Wisconsin State Department of
Public Instruction

Lloyd Urdal, Chairman
Department of Education
Washington State University

Scott L. Ward, Instructor
School of Journalism
University of Wisconsin

Clifford Weigle, Executive Head
Department of Communication
Stanford University

Mrs. Robert Wiener
Executive Committee Member
National Committee for the
Support of Public Schools

Roy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer
National School Public Relations
Association

We have asked current counterparts from these organizations/agencies to respond to our questions.

Definition of terms

The 1967 report refers to *educational communication* and *public information* in a similar manner.

Language in this field in the 1990s is more likely to be *public relation, school-community relations* or *community relations* (to judge from titles of professionals in the current directory of NSPRA members).

For the sake of this report in any case, all these terms are taken to refer to programs designed to inform and involve people in schools and the community in a variety of ways, with the purpose of maintaining and/or improving the quality of local education for students.

Case Study

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S PRINCIPAL HAD NO PRINCIPLES

by Ann Griffin

"We want your resignation, Ward." It was Holly Mills, president of the Falls County school board, speaking.

"What? Are you serious? Is this someone's idea of a practical joke? What have I done?" Superintendent J. Ward Nelson stammered.

"It's no joke, Ward. We've discussed it as a board, and we've come to a unanimous decision. We would like to have your resignation effective June 30. If you should decide to fight this, you need to know that we have...evidence." The board president's voice was beginning to quaver as she concluded, "We are not prepared to discuss the matter further at this time, Ward; perhaps you should think about it."

"Think about it! The matter, this matter, concerns 16 years of my life! If you are not prepared to discuss this further now, then I suggest you do prepare—and quickly!" Ward Nelson angrily picked up his briefcase and strode from the boardroom, his outrage obvious to the seated group.

Nelson, a 25-year veteran in the field of education, felt stunned. As he sat in his office, he had played and replayed this conversation in his mind for the past hour, and still hadn't a clue to the reasoning behind it. Now his office clock read 11 p.m. and his wife, Harriet, would be worried. He had told her that the board meeting would probably be over by 10 with nothing much on the agenda. Well, that part was true; the "time bomb" had come in executive session. The call for his resignation were the first words out of the board president's mouth. There hadn't been a clue before that; the regular session had gone without a hitch, everyone laughing, joking with each other before the meeting was called to order. This is bizarre, he thought, as he inserted the key into the door of his family's home for the past 16 years.

Ward Nelson had never considered becoming superintendent in his 15 years as high school principal, but they had wanted him—the board had asked him. And now, within one year, they were demanding his resignation.

It was hard to believe that they had been in Falls County that long. It seemed like only yesterday, when he had rushed home to tell Harriet that the superintendent of Falls County had offered him the job of principal in the sole high school. It was to be his third principalship but the only one he had actually sought on his own. The others had just fallen into place, but this one was different.

Some time earlier, he and Harriet had taken the kids up to the Texas Panhandle one weekend to see the country around Palo Dura Canyon. Losing their way one evening just about sunset, they found themselves in Falls County.

It was instant rapport for both of them as they drove through the community and saw quaint old homes, towering oak trees, a courthouse square with a fountain, and beautiful new schools. The four new buildings housed 2,500 students in an elementary, intermediate, junior high, and high school. They had spent three days and two nights there. On returning home, Ward had written to the superintendent at Falls County indicating his interest in case a vacancy occurred.

A reply arrived just two weeks later, stating that the present high school principal had decided to retire only a week before Ward's letter had reached Falls County. Harriet had made some comment about the timeliness being "spooky," but he had accepted the situation as destiny. His first interviews with John Nash, the superintendent, went well, and after the site-based interviews, he felt even more confident. He was soon called by Nash to personally offer Ward the position.

Nelson had been a model citizen all of his life, believing that morals and ethics were the foundations of leadership, and had applied these in his 16 years as an educator.

So for 15 years, he had been principal of Falls County High School, pouring his lifeblood into the community and school district. And yet last year, when Nash had approached him to ask if he would step into the superintendency when Nash retired in June, Ward was overwhelmed. He had never considered becoming superintendent. In fact, he wasn't even certified although he had a doctorate in accounting. Regardless, the board had hired him without conducting a search with the understanding that he should apply for a temporary certificate and do his course work as he had the time.

They had wanted him, they had asked him, he reassured himself. And Ward must have been performing well. His evaluation two months ago was perfect; not one point was taken off. The board had even commented on his excellence, given him an $8,000 raise and extended his contract for another year. His contract was now in effect for three more years.

"Oh, there you are. How did it go? I expected you some time ago. I hope everything went all right," Harriet's voice welcomed him home. She sat on the pale green sofa, her back to him. All he could see was her dark red hair bobbing as she read and graded paper after paper. It seemed to him that she was always there. It didn't matter what time he came in, she would be there on the sofa, reading and grading. For 21 years, she had been reading and grading English papers for the hundreds and hundreds of students she had taught and loved. Harriet was absolutely the best English teacher in the world, and it wasn't just his opinion. It was also that of every teacher and administrator who knew her.

"They asked me to resign, Harriet," Ward Nelson almost whispered, not even realizing that he had spoken.

"Oh, stop teasing, Ward. You almost sound serious. Come and sit while I finish these last few tests," laughed Harriet.

Ward couldn't reply, and his silence made her look his way as he rounded the sofa. Ward Nelson felt old for the first time in years, as he recounted to his wife what had taken place in the executive session of the board meeting. When he finished, she quietly asked, "What evidence could they have, Ward?"

He didn't have an answer for her.

That night, Superintendent Nelson asked himself that question repeatedly and could not think of an answer that would justify his requested resignation. He had been a model citizen all his life. Of the Christian faith, and a hard-working educator for 25 years, he believed that moral and ethics were the foundations of leadership.

Nelson returned to his office the following day, his mind clearer and more objective. He began to recall instances that might have played a part in the board's action, like the secretive phone calls Candy Mayfield, his own secretary made immediately after important conferences in his office with key district personnel.

Over the next few days, other pieces of the puzzle began to fit together. The largest piece involved the new high school principal, Tom Lawrence. Ward had known him for years, in fact, had had been Tom's principal at

Logan High School in the mid '80s. It was no surprise to Ward when Tom was among the final candidates for the principal's position. He had been a topnotch teacher and then assistant principal at Logan.

Although several candidates for the position had principalship experience, Tom expressed himself well and the site-based committee was taken with him.

As Tom's first year as principal progressed though, Ward saw that he expected his assistants to do the work while he talked with his stock broker or fiddled with his office computer. As superintendent, Ward visited all campuses in the district periodically. On several of those occasions, he had witnessed fights among students at the high school. He had planned to observe the campus only occasionally, to give Tom a fair shot, and had kept his visits to a minimum.. Even so, Ward's past secretary at the high school and several teachers had called Ward repeatedly during the year to express their concerns regarding teacher morale and discipline problems.

Ward was also becoming alarmed at the school's deteriorating condition. He had worked for the last 15 years to put that high school into shape. In addition, Falls County High had won both state and national awards throughout that period and now all seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Added to this situation was the information given him by Sarah Owens, the high school secretary, that Tom had been constantly on the phone, talking to one board member or another during the past few months.

Another call came from Sarah three days after that Monday board meeting. Ward was at work at his usual time, 6:30 a.m. It was quiet then and he could usually complete a lot of paperwork before the staff arrived. Suddenly, the phone rang. "This is Sarah," the whispered voice on the other end.

"Hello, Sarah, how are you this morning?' Nelson tried to be his usual cheerful self.

"Sir, I... I just heard something really strange and I... I felt you should know," the trembling voice continued. "I don't mean to sound like a gossip, but I think you should know about this. About 10 minutes ago, I was walking by Principal Lawrence's office, his door was open, and he was on the phone with his back to the door. I heard him say, 'Well John, I happen to know that Ward Nelson is on his way out. I'll be moving up so we'll be needing someone for this high school, and I wanted to know if you would be interested.' Oh, Dr. Nelson, you can imagine! I almost dropped my coffee cup. I didn't wait to hear more because I was afraid he might turn around and see me. I'm just shocked. What's happening?"

Nelson reassured her, promising to call her later and hung up the phone thinking, "Well, well, now the clouds are finally lifting."

Over the next few days, other pieces of the puzzle fell into place—the largest piece involving the new high school principal, Tom Lawrence.

By Friday, more of the puzzle was coming together. It wasn't that Ward dislike Candy Mayfield, his secretary and right hand in the administration office. In fact, he felt that she was well qualified for the position she held. But, he had felt uneasy with her from the first day. She was too eager to please, and she seemed to have work that kept her at the office later than anyone else, especially for the past few months. On Friday evening, the motive behind her actions became apparent.

About 8 that evening, Ward had made a stop at the local 7-11 store, and just as he was leaving, Rob Sanders, a school board member, approached him at his car. "Ward, I've been meaning to call you. My Paula Sue is working on a project in one of her college classes and needs some information on site-based management. She asked me to check with you since you had always encouraged her in a teaching career." Rob was smiling as if the board meeting Monday night had never happened.

Ward Nelson couldn't believe this was happening. First, they asked him to resign; now he was being asked to help one of their offspring with a college project. He tried to respond as politely as possible, without being curt. "Yes, Rob, I do have some information on SBDM. It's at the office, I'll get it Monday and drop it by your house that evening."

"I know this sounds a little pushy, Ward, but Paula Sue is coming home tomorrow and had to return early Sunday. Would it be too much of an inconvenience to run by there with me now, so that I could have it for her tomorrow?" Rob asked, a little embarrassed.

"Well, John, I happen to know that Superintendent Nelson is on his way out and I'll be moving up, so we'll be needing someone for this high school. Are you interested?"

"Sure, I'm in no hurry. Follow me to the office," replied Ward, still astonished at Sanders' insensitivity.

As the superintendent and board member left their cars in the parking lot of the administration building, Rob gestures towards the lighted windows, "Candy sure is dedicated. Friday night and she's still working at this time."

"Yeah," Ward replied, uncomfortably surprised. As they entered, he saw that the lights were on in the reception area, Candy's office, the copyroom, and finally, his own office. They could hear the copier being used, but evidently Candy had not heard them as they had passed. Ward wasn't sure of how he would handle this situation. Just as he walked into Candy's office, which was next door to his, he heard another voice...a male voice. He and Rob glanced at each other.

Just then, Tom Lawrence walked out of Ward's office with three files in his hand, excitedly announcing, "Candygirl, this is going to cinch our move.. oh...Ward, Rob, what are you..." But before he could finish, Candy emerged from the copyroom practically ecstatic as she cried, "Did I tell you we could pull this off or what...er...Superintendent Nelson! I...uh...I was just copying these files for you...I mean your..."

"Save it Candy!" Ward was curt. "Rob, I think you need to call the other board members and have them come over. Tom, Candy, I'll take those files. I think you two had better have a seat. This could be a long night."

The board members arrived quickly and the two men told them what they had witnessed in the offices. The board members questioned Tom and Candy separately and then agreed that they should be suspended from work pending a special session of the board. Tom and Candy were released and the files were placed in the safe. Ward excused himself, walked into his office, took a book off a shelf titled SBDM, the Quality Management, handed it to Rob Sanders, and walked out the door.

The Falls County School Board convened the following Tuesday at 7 p.m. in a special meeting. There was standing room only with the crowd overflowing into the halls and reception area. Over 300 people, including every teacher, coach, secretary, and custodian who worked at Falls County High School, were present. As soon as the regular session was called to order, the board quickly adjourned to executive session in and adjoining private room to deal with matters involving personnel.

The executive session began at 7:10 p.m. with Candy Mayfield answering the questions. Thirty-eight minutes later, she walked out with red swollen eyes, dabbing a tissue to her nose, and immediately left. The board then called Tom Lawrence. After 45 minutes, Tom bolted out of the room and straight to the parking lot. In succession, the board heard from about 10 school teachers, Sarah Owens, and the payroll clerk and receptionist at the administration office.

Finally, at 10:35 p.m. the board called Superintendent Nelson. As Ward entered the room, a flurry of shuffling papers and the sound of throats being cleared greeted him. All eyes were downcast. Holly Mills, board president, stood.

"Ward, I...don't really know how to say this any other way than to say it straight out," she began. "The board was given some information regarding you and your...ah...responsibilities as superintendent of this school district. We have just accepted the resignations of Tom Lawrence and Candy Mayfield, and we would like to ask you to just forget that last board meeting and accept our most sincere apologies. We would like you to continue here as superintendent," she haltingly finished.

Ward Nelson sat quietly for a moment. The silence was deafening. Finally, he spoke, "I have given this school district 16 years of my life. I have been loyal and dedicated, and my record is spotless as indicated by the perfect score that I received on the evaluation made by this board two months ago. How am I repaid? I was not even given the courtesy of knowing the accusations against me, much less a chance to defend myself. If I accept your offer and forgive and forget, who is to say this will not happen again a year or two years form now."

There was only silence. Ward Nelson rose from his chair adding, "I really can't discuss this matter further at this time. I will talk with you later." He opened the door and left the silent room.

He entered the hall, but rather than turning left to proceed to the parking lot, he continued down the long corridor. Stopping, he took out his keys and opened the door to his office.

He walked around and stood behind the large mahogany desk, slowly running his hand over the brown leather chair. It's so ironic, he mused. Only a year ago, he had not even thought of being superintendent, and yet now, he couldn't imagine being anything else, anywhere else. But, the questions loomed large in his mind. Should he do as the board asked, accept the apology and forget that all this had happened? After all, they had been duped. Could he ask his family, himself, to give up everything they cherished? What was he to do?

Ann Griffin is assistant principal of Montgomery Junior High School in Montgomery Schools, Montgomery, Texas.

The Case Study and Response departments are edited by Philip T. West. Send potential case studies and responses for consideration to Dr. West, Professor of Educational Administration, Harrington Education Center, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Response to This Issue's Case Study

Making an Inside Move to Dismiss a Whole Nelson

By Donna Alonzo

While a superintendent functions at the discretion of his or her board, one would hope that the board itself will use some discretion. The action of the Falls County School Board, when it requested Superintendent Nelson's resignation, was without any due process of personnel education code and in direct opposition to the superintendent's evaluation. It was not on the executive session agenda in accordance with the regulation of a public meeting. Furthermore, the superintendent was not allowed representation, given the circumstances of the complaints, or the opportunity to explain or refute his accusers.

Ward Nelson was not obligated to respond to the board's request, especially in light of its refusal to specify the complaints against him. However, by walking angrily out of both executive sessions, he had magnified the communication problem existing between this board and its superintendent.

In addition to ignoring employee due process, the Falls County School Board should also be cautioned on meeting together outside of posted board meetings, let alone making decisions at those non-public meetings. President Mills had stated that the board was in unanimous agreement on the resignation request, yet the superintendent was unaware of this meeting when this was affected. Later, board members were hastily assembled to attend and impromptu meeting, at which time they questioned a principal, secretary, and other employees without representation, or due process, and then called a special session.

The board's assumption that Superintendent Nelson was guilty, especially given his strong staff support, previous administrative success, excellent evaluation, and many years in the district, does not bode well for their future working relationship. If Nelson wishes to continue with his contract, he should clarify the personnel process with the board members. For example, one might ask why the board members were receiving and acting on complaints without the input of their superintendent.

The Falls County board members need to be reminded that they are responsible for the hiring of the district's superintendent and it is that superintendent's job to manage the district. The line between making policy and executing it should be made clear to this board. While addressing these issues, the board members should seriously consider a communication in-service workshop to refresh themselves with personnel policies and guidelines for conducting public meetings. Superintendent Nelson's options, should he decide not to remain in the district, might include litigation (though this is not recommended in his situation), or if his support from the community and staff is strong enough, a teacher-led recall election of the school board.

Donna Alonzo, superintendent of the Mission Union School District, is on leave pursuing a doctorate in educational administration at Texas A&M University.

1997 *Journal* Editorial Review Board

Larry Ascough, Elgin, IL
Don Bagin, Rowan College, Glassboro, NJ
William J. Banach, Banach, Banach, Cassidy, Ray, MI
B. Dean Bowles, University of Wisconsin
Carolyn H. Chapman, Univ. of Nevada, Reno
Floyd Coppedge, State Secretary of Education, OK
Larry E. Decker, Florida Atlantic University
Don Gallagher, professor emeritus, Rowan College
Frederick Gies, Wright State University
Mel Heller, Loyola University, Chicago
Anne L. Jefferson, University of Ottawa
J. William Jones, PECO Energy Co., PA
Theodore J. Kowalski, Ball State University, IN
Tami James Moore, University of Nebraska, Kearney
Frances Powell, Duval Co. Public Schools, FL
Donna M. Schmitt, Eastern Michigan University
I. Sue Shepard, Southeast Missouri State University
Harriett Stonehill, Megaskills Education Center, Washington, DC
Arthur W. Stellar, Kingston Schools, NY
Terry Wiedmer, Ball State University, IN
Philip T. West, Texas A&M
Charles L. Willis, Dayton, OH
Brenda Williams, College of William and Mary, VA

by Randall L. Turk

A Bilingual Parent/Teacher Hotline Improved an Inner-city Parochial School's Climate

In 1996, a field marketing study was conducted of an inner-city parochial school by a team of seven students and one faculty member of the master's degree program in educational administration at a midwestern university. (Field studies are made for schools who have teachers enrolled in this program.)

The study was made to identify strategies that could maintain the school's culturally diverse population. One strategy, a bilingual parent-teacher hotline recommended by the field study team, resulted in an immediate increase of parent/teacher communication and an improved school climate.

During the five years prior to the study, the Catholic school's student population had declined about 40% while transitioning from a school with several ethnic groups to a student population of predominantly two. The school also experienced a significant increase in minority students whose parents spoke Spanish as a first language. The major shift in the student population created a language barrier that affected parent/teacher communication and produced a negative effect on the school's climate. The data showed that the parents who spoke Spanish as a primary language did not feel informed about school events. The same group of parents stated that they experienced difficulty communicating with teachers and other school staff. A lack of participation in school events was attributed to the language barrier by many of the staff.

The field study team made three recommendations to alleviate the communication barrier. In addition to the bilingual hotline, they advised that all newsletters and other communication be written in both Spanish and English, and that newsletters and calendars be mailed to the parents instead of being carried home by the students.

Cost was a primary factor in deciding which recommendation to implement first. The parent/teacher hotline could be established with slight cost to the school because of a local television station that provides a telecommunication network to private and public schools through the "Channel 3 Parent-Teacher Hotline" using telecommunication technology equipment provided by the television station.

To gain full benefit of the bilingual hotline, the network also provided information in the monthly newsletter and school calendar. The hotline greatly reduced parent dependence on written correspondence, while increasing their knowledge of school activities and their communication with teachers. During the first month of operation, the hotline averaged over two calls per family.

The increased knowledge of school activities resulted in overall increased parent involvement, but was particularly noticeable among limited-English-speaking parents.

In addition to investigating the school's communication needs, the research team examined three primary concerns of the staff. Those were:

How can the school maintain its image as a culturally diverse school?

Does the school meet the needs of its customers?

What factors contribute to families leaving the school?

An analysis of the written questionnaire, focus group, and telephone interviews results provided these conclusions.

The school's changing student population could be attributed to two factors: families moving out of the neighborhood and the increase of new students from other parishes. Financial aid, in the form of a scholarship, provided money for students of only one parish, and parents belonging to the other parish believed this to be an unfair practice. Parents who had moved their families out of the area believed that the commuting distance was excessive and, because of lack of transportation, discontinued their child(ren)'s education at the Catholic school.

Families left the school, the survey revealed, because of changing neighborhoods and parents' concern for their and their children's safety. The lack of transportation from outlying areas was also noted.

Based on these findings, the survey team recommended that the school

- Review the financial aid policy to ensure its fairness and equity to all students,
- Examine the curriculum to determine that instruction and cultural activities are in balance, highlight all ethnicities, and focus on cultural similarities,
- Create a transportation system for those students living outside the school area so all students have access to a Catholic education.

Five focus areas—student achievement, spirituality, cultural diversity, school climate, and customer satisfaction—emerged from the study:

Student Achievement

Parents of children currently attending the school believed that their children were receiving a sound education, as did those parents of children who had left the school within the last two years. The latter were satisfied with the school's academic program. The staff agreed that the school's academic program supported high academic achievement.

Spirituality

The parents believed that the school met their children's religious needs, while the staff reported that spirituality and a Catholic education were important aspects of the school's curriculum.

Cultural Diversity

Minority enrollment had increased form 17 to 37 percent during the past five years as the enrollment fluctuated from 239 to a low of 192 to a present state of 240 students. Of the current enrolled student body, 22 are in the pre-K program. While the staff believes that too much emphasis is placed on cultural differences, parents reported that there should be less emphasis on multi-cultural education.

School Climate

Parents generally agreed that the school environment was safe for their children, and both the staff and the parents believed that the conditions allowed the children to learn. Thought the staff thought that the environment at the school was safe during the school day, the opposite was believed about non-school hours. Neighborhood safety was also a concern of some staff and parents.

Customer Satisfaction

Not all parents felt informed about activities at their child(ren)'s school; limited-English-speaking parents had difficulty reading school communications. Some parents perceived inequalities in the financial support system at their child(ren)'s school. If transportation was available, a number of staff and parents believed, families that had moved would continue to attend inner-city parochial school.

In this study, qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used to collect data from three different groups—parents, instructional staff, and non-instructional personnel. A 12-item Likert-scale written questionnaire provided data from the parents of students currently enrolled at the school. A two-page format allowed the questionnaire to be written in Spanish on one side and English on the other. The questionnaire return rate was 78.4%.

The qualitative methodologies of focus groups and open-ended question telephone interviews provided in-depth descriptive data. Eighteen out of 20 instructional and non-instructional staff participated in separate focus groups. Parents who had withdrawn their child(ren) from the school during the past two years comprised the third group. Purposive sampling methodology selected the names of individuals to be contacted for telephone interviews that provided data on why the parents had withdrawn their child(ren) from the school.

In cooperation with the host school, the field study was conducted as partial requirement of the master's degree program in educational administration, which uses a field-based inquiry curriculum. The contributing authors are (in alphabetical order): Mary Brown, Mary Ann Conyers, Doug Carr, Jeff Kohnman, Kathleen Patterson, Kevin Stucky, and Mary Treaster, M. Ed students and members of the field study team.

Randall L. Turk is an assistant professor of educational administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas.

Guidelines for Submissions

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal--scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles should be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association.

We prefer citations to be numbered sequentially in the text and then detailed following the article. An author can include references of related articles/book with address of publishers—in a separate list. We accept photographs, illustrations and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a 9" x 12" self-addressed stamped envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, *Journal of Educational Relations*, Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657 (UPS address-1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011) 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

Recent Back Issues—SALE

These back issues are available for only $7 each (normal price is $15) on this special sale.

- Any **5** are **$25**, plus $4 postage.
- All **19** are **$100**, plus $5 postage.

Highlights of each of these issues, plus the volume and number and year of publication, are listed. Note that all issues also contain a case study, book reviews, research reports and other feature articles. **(Note ❖ are especially valuable for principals and educational leaders.)**

❖ **Vol. 13, No. 1, 1990**. A model school-communications relations program school board policy, ways to involve parents, raising teacher expectations of students.
❖ **13-2, 90**. Politics of and a quiz on parent involvement, community service.
• **13-3, 90**. School PR in the 21st Century, teen community service, parent support building, home-school collaboration.
❖ **13-4, 91**. Learn from Japanese education, mentor program, parent-teacher relations.
• **14-1, 91**. Home-school relations, a school board governance curriculum.
• **14-2, 91**. Decentralization, national goals for business and politics, elementary school communication.
❖ **14-3, 91**. Dealing with angry people, poor communication power, get rid of common sense.
• **14-4, 92**. Avoid a media crisis, communication grapevine, almanac of low-cost PR ideas.
• **15-1, 93**. A model PR program, the comma trauma, countering vouchers.
• **15-2, 94**. School-business partnerships, Realtors, a PR plan for special ed.
• **15-4, 94**. Special monograph issue—The Ultimate Guide to School-Community Relations.
• **16-1, 95**. Counter critics, dos to win budget and bond issues, a study of four states' superintendents.
• **16-2, 95**. Home visits, low cost PR, guidelines to publishers.
❖ **16-3, 95**. Ways to reduce stress, ideas for school success, building positives.
• **17-1, 96**. Cable television, questions and answers about PR, school and PR checklists.
• **17-2, 96**. Politics of a bond issue, writing for publication, PR survey report.
❖ **17-3, 96**. 99 ways to improve communication, teacher attitudes, why school costs have increased.
❖ **17-4, 96**. Perceptions of educators vs. parents, bosting student achievement, a university partnership.

How to Order Back Issues

Circle the issues that you want and enclose this form, or order by Volume and Number.

You can order single copies, multiples of one issue, mixed copies from the list or one of each of the 19 listed editions.

Add the applicable shipping charges ($4 for one to four issues) to your total order.

Send orders to
Journal of Educational Relations
1830 Walnut Street
Camp Hill PA 17011

Journal of Educational Relations
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657

Subscriber Magazine

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

YOUR EDITORIAL RESPONSE IS REQUESTED—See Page 24

EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD
Larry Ascough, Elgin, IL
Don Bagin, Rowan College, Glassboro, NJ
William J. Banach, Banach, Banach & Cassidy, Ray, MI
B. Dean Bowles, University of Wisconsin
Carolyn H. Chapman, Univ. of Nevada, Reno
Floyd Coppedge, State Secretary of Education, OK
Larry E. Decker, Florida Atlantic University
Don Gallagher, professor emeritus, Rowan College
Frederick Gies, Wright State University
Mel Heller, Loyola University, Chicago
Anne L. Jefferson, University of Ottawa
J. William Jones, PECO Energy Co., PA
Theodore J. Kowalski, Ball State University, IN
Tami James Moore, University of Nebraska, Kearney
Frances Powell, Duval Co. Public Schools, FL
Donna M. Schmitt, Eastern Michigan University
J. Sue Shepard, Southwest Missouri State University
Harriett Stonehill, MegaSkills Education Center, Washington, DC
Arthur W. Steller, Kingston Schools, NY
Terry Wiedmer, Ball State University, IN
Philip T. West, Texas A&M
Charles L. Willis, Dayton, OH
Brenda Williams, College of William and Mary, VA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Journal of Educational
RELATIONS

h Ii Jj
Day 3
8:15 Phys. Ed.
1:30 music
"Never begin
sentence with
because
so by
that to
The Mini Page
On the Way to the White

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships Vol. 18 No. 2

PS 026911

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Communication Director: An ombudsman person at heart?

We feature in this edition details about a parent advocacy program that can be of great help for those families who uncomfortable working/meeting with the school staff. And we discuss school foundations and raise questions about teaching of grammar.

In the next issue we put the spotlight on single parents and their children, and how educators ought to be working with this rapidly growing segment of the school-community population.

One can ask: What do these topics have to do with school-community relations? The person in a district who has primary responsibility for school-community relations, on a part- or full-time basis, probably has a full agenda of work already. We do not suggest that such a person assume additional responsiblities, such as those mentioned above.

What we do suggest is that these are ideas and means that educators and administrators and boards ought to consider when the topics of educational quality and how well their students are doing, or not doing, are reviewed.

The concept of ombudsperson has not been widely adopted by school boards and officials, as far as we can tell. Those districts who employ a director of communications (or school PR) do have a person who usually has a board perspective of the district's operations, and in effect, is at least a passive ombudsperson.

We're trying to say that a reader should feel free to pass along an idea that could be implemented locally, even if someone else has that area of responsibility. We'd be pleased if someone in a school gave serious thought to a parent advocacy program because of an article in our *Journal*.

Our Reprint Policy

We grant school disctict or school subscriber the right to photocopy articles from this *Journal* for local school or district use. (This policy does not apply to intermediate units and to higher education subscribers.) We do require that any items photocopied for distribution carry this credit line:

Reproduced with permission from the Journal of Educational Relations, Vol. __, No. __; the Journal is published quarterly at $48 at Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657.

Al Holliday

Al Holliday
Editor-Publisher

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 18, No. 2
2nd Quarter 1997

IFC **Editor's Column**

2 **Gus Asks: Who Do You Know Up at School?**
By David Carr and Richard Smalter

4 **Educators Should Promote Grammatical and Writing Competency.** *By Alvin Brown*

8 **Parent Advocates Can Improve Parent-Teacher Relations**
By Patricia Lindauer, Garth Petrie, Lois Gray, and Libby Vickers

18 **A Mission Statement**—America's first schools provide a model of effectiveness

20 **What Do Parents Think About Education Reform?** A recent report by the Education Commission of the States.

24 **School Foundations:** Organize to Seek Out a Variety of Contributors. *By Michael Page Miller*

28 **Case Study—The Caring Carrintons Muster Their Class Clique.** Parents fight a principal's new grouping plans.
By Debbie McKinney.
Case Study Response—A Sound Position Needs Support.
By Billy L. Young

32 **Research**—Marketing for a Rural District Requires a Community Partnership and Planning. *By doctoral students, Wichita State University.*

34 **Book Reviews:** Why parents need to be involved; reporting student learning how to build customer loyalty.
Edited by Arthur W. Steller

IBC **Editorial Review Board; Photographer Credits**

RELATIONS The Journal of Educational Relations—ISSN 0741-3653
Editor-in-chief Albert E. Holliday
Managing editor Joan M. Holliday

Book reviews-Arthur W. Steller   Research/case studies-Philip T. West

The Journal of Educational Relations is published quarterly by the Educational Communication Center,
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657. Telephone 717-761-6620.
Copyright 1997.
Subscriptions: Individual rate, $48 per year. Single copy, $15. Library rate, $60 per year. Single copy, $20.
Add $4 for subscriptions outside of the United States. Payment in U.S. funds.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Journal of Educational Relations*, Box 657, Camp Hill PA 17001-0657.

From the Boiler Room

Who Do You Know Up at School?

by Gus, the custodian at Eastside Grammar

Not too long ago Mr. Keck, our principal, came back from some Fancy Dan conference downstate on Communications and School Public Relations. Now, I don't 'spect those folks puttin' on that conference knew that we wuz experts in good school communications. I figgered Mr. Keck went to the blame thing just to let all them experts know how we done it at Eastside Grammar an' give us a chance to brag a little.

Well, sir, when Mr. Keck came back from downstate he wuz as excited as a cat in a room full of rockin' chairs. Said he learned a lot from the top man at NSPRA or somethin' like 'at. Started right off to call all of the faculty for a special meetin' after school. Boy, were those teachers shook up! I've never seen a meetin' called so fast!

Strange thing happened. Mr. Keck said he wanted me and the secretary, an' everybody who worked at Eastside to be there as well. Like to tell ya, we all felt as though we wuz in trouble. How often do the cooks come to a meetin'? Had to be trouble!

When we wuz all seated at the meetin', had our coffee and doughnut, Mr. Keck started in tellin' us a story he'd picked up from the top dog at the meetin'.

Seems a school decided to see what kind of communication patterns their school had with their constituents. Them wuz his words, but what it all meant wuz, who did the talkin' round the neighborhood 'bout the school. Here's how the school, somewhere's in Missouri, went about it accordin' to Mr. Keck, who got it from this NSPRA guy.

First off, the faculty met as a group and divided up their school attendance by streets. Sorta a political move. Then they assigned each teacher to several of them streets. Next they decided on a question they would ask every third door they came to. The question wuz, "Who do you know up at school?"

Now the smart part wuz providin' each teacher with a clip board and a blank sheet of paper. You know how a guy with a clipboard looks. He kin go anywhere's 'cause he looks so official. The Missus an' I even carried clipboards to the high school gym last winter and got to sit on the bench during the game. Everybody, even the coach, thought we wuz doin' somethin' official. Well, anyway's these teachers were to knock on the door, say their name, tell 'em where they wuz from, and ask who they knew up at school. After an hour an' a half, they were to come back to school an' tally their findings.

"Cordin' to Mr. Keck, when the results wuz all in, folks on that faculty couldn't believe what they found. Guess they wuz kinda' upset what with gittin' their noses out o' joint. The results showed that the person most people knew wuz the secretary at the school. They all figgered that it wuz because she lived in the area an' had been there through the last three principals. She answers the phone, too. She is the first person visitors or parents run into at school. What she does or how she does it leaves an impression on folks.

The second place most named person wuz my counterpart, the custodian. Most people realized that he lived in the district an' had been there a long time too. After all, who opens the school? Who locks 'er up? Who is there on Saturday for the special program? Who is the guy that totes all the PTA packages? You betcha folks know the custodian! (But I don't much like comin' in second what with all that work I do round here.)

The cooks come in third. Guess the kids all talk 'bout the food they is fed noontimes. Course that could be good or bad, food that is, but anyways the cooks wuz known. Round here the homemade rolls, cakes 'n all are really bragged up. Why Emma even gits calls for recipes on leftovers. If ya play your cards right, ya might even git one of her special chocolate chip cookies at the coffee break.

The bus drivers came in fourth. Folks felt they knew them, due to the fact that they wuz gittin' the kids to school an' home again ever' day. Why Lamar, down at the garage brags on how safe our drivers are! Claims he don't git enough body work from the busses to pay for his annual Florida trip.

The fifth named person wuz a teacher or a coach--somebody that had done somethin' outstanding. Somethin' like backin' into the superintendent's car, winning the lottery, or losing the 458th game in a row.

Finally, the principal come in a pullin' up the rear of the poll. Mr. Keck didn't like to find that out, but he was big about it. Here wuz all these folks, not really part of the teachin' faculty, but workin' at the school nonetheless, yet they wuz the ones most people knew. They wuz the one's tellin' the school's story.

The meetin' was about over when Mr. Keck announced that we would be a "school group" from now on an' all folks would attend our faculty meetin's. Said if people wuz goin' to be speakin' for the school, they better git front row seats. Guess that fella sure knew what he wuz talkin' about. He made a real believer out'a Mr. Keck, an he should know 'cause he's the principal.

"Gus" is a figment of the vivid imagination of two university professors and a principal, and their tales of Gus' wisdom have appeared as a regular feature of the Illinois School Board Journal for 26 years. David Carr, a professor at Northern Illinois University, has been a co-author of all the columns. Clifford Chaffee of the same university was first co-author; Richard Smalter, an elementary school principal for North Boone schools in Illinois, is the current co-author.
A collection of 36 of the early columns is available, for $9 (no purchase orders) from the Illinois Association of School Boards, Publications, 1209 South Fifth St., Springfield IL 62703.

Educators Should Promote Grammatical and Writing Competency

by Alvin Brown

Although retired for nine years as a writing and grammar instructor of English in community colleges and private business schools, I wanted to judge the current degree of proficiency in these subjects. Therefore, I became a written response scorer for the New York State Teacher Certification Examination that was held in July 1994. Such a written test is required for all college graduates who seek to become licensed New York State teachers.

These exam papers were written by individuals who theoretically possess the best composition skills, since they are the ones who want to instruct others. Those not in the teaching field per se—accountants, computer operators, salesclerks—wouldn't be expected to achieve as high a degree of competency. After scoring 385 compositions, I judged the caliber of much of the writing to be less than impressive. Multitudinous errors in grammar, syntax, punctuation and spelling were evident. It appears English skills were still lacking even among those college graduates who desire to instruct others.

Was my experience unique? Adminis-trators and classroom teachers in all types of high schools and colleges routinely comment on the lack of grammatical knowledge and writing proficiency, so evident in many of their students. Awareness of this situation, however, is no longer confined to the halls of academia. Now the general public has gained such insights, as newspaper and magazine columnists routinely lament the inadequacy of basic skills evidenced by high school and even college graduates. In letters-to-the-editors sections, exasperated business professionals decry the poor writing ability and grammatical imperfections possessed by their employees.

Perhaps the most telling indictment was made by Richard W. Riley, U. S. Secretary of Education, when he announced a finding reached by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. In its annual report, as stated by the New York Times, this association declared: "Only two percent of 11th graders write well enough to meet national goals." Can we as a society afford this dismal state of basic communicative skills?

With the absence of competent grammatical and writing skills prevalent at all levels, school administrators must acknowledge what is now currently taught in most middle and secondary schools just isn't that effective. Changes must be made both inside and outside the classroom for a knowledge of grammar—fundamental to intelligible writing—to be strengthened.

We as a nation lack good grammatical and writing skills because our schools do not competently teach the basics. As a result, large numbers of high school graduates wallow in the grammatical morass of being unable to clearly write and speak in their native language—English.

Grammar and Punctuation are the Foundations of Proper Writing

I believe a major reason for poor writing is want of grammatical knowledge. Students do not lack sound ideas (for these have been expressed quite well while speaking in class). Rather, they are reluctant to put such concepts on paper.

Why? Many students realize—often more so than teachers—they are weak in grammar and punctuation, the building blocks upon which proper writing is based. In order to avoid mistakes, pupils' complex thoughts are now reduced to the most basic form and are written as simple sentences that necessitate a minimum of syntax and punctuation.

Persons must learn to organize ideas, to state facts and to reach logical conclusions. I have found these valid thought processes are greatly negated or watered down by fear of employing poor grammar and punctuation. As one student aptly said, "To minimize mistakes, I keep all sentences really short and simple and use words of two syllables or less." I'm sure he spoke not only for himself but also for many others in the class. Yes, such a dubious procedure can result in fewer errors but it stifles and smothers writing ability. Students should be able to express more intricate thoughts instead of using degrees of oversimplification to avoid mistakes.

I present the instruction of grammar/punctuation from the perspective of a faculty member in high school and community college who was assigned the final responsibility for teaching this subject. My classes were composed of students who had undergone years of instruction but were still deficient. For example, some wrote "I" as "i": others thought "it's" and "its'" were two forms of possessive pronouns: very few comprehended the differences between "lie" and "lay." Upon graduation, many of these same pupils would be employing grammatical knowledge as office workers and secretaries. So expectations from all—the students, the administrators and even prospective employers—were at the conclusion of my class that these persons finally would have mastered the basics.

The following beliefs must be changed before learning can proceed:

A Popular Misconception Often Held By Students

They say: Speaking proper English is "nerdy." It's simply not "cool."

I respond: Permitting slang or street language or Ebonics in any of my classes is strongly and quickly discouraged because such talk is not correct, it is not accurate. If deviations such as "he speaked" or "he and me" or "he know" are allowed expression and are given even a scintilla of credibility, then why not "he go"? or "he gone"? or "he had went"? Just where does one establish a criterion when permitting myriad distortions of what is proper?

A Popular Misconception Occasionally Held by Teachers

They say: Literature, plays and essays are what students need to know and study for these are the works which are meaningful and enduring. Grammar, on the other hand, is something students will automatically pick up and use by performing extensive readings of the above.

I respond: Of course, the achievements of classical writers and current authors are important, but such writings are based upon a foundation of grammatical rules and principles. Why should teaching these basics be regarded as somewhat demeaning or as "second-class" subjects?

Teaching of English Factors

Regardless of the text used, it's the teacher's enthusiasm and zeal that are the most important factors in class presentations. Instructors should state concepts in ways that have meaning to students even though these explanations may not be exactly as shown in the text. Deviations are often necessary. Explaining obtuse grammatical principles that are dryly presented in an uninspiring book often triggers the class to unhappily conclude they have been through all this before. Teachers must dig into their bag of interesting educational presentations and use them to awaken students from their lethargies. I urge that a beginning instructor read different grammar books (some are markedly different from others), talk to more experienced teachers, swap favorite ideas and listen to students' notions about explaining. Don't depend upon a text to do all the instructional work. With the passage of time, the instructor also will develop exclusive and unique presentations that are relevant.

Teaching of Punctuation Factors

I firmly believe more than half of all classroom instructors use the wrong teaching methodology in their presentation of punctuation. But these personnel would be quick to maintain they are only following the text. In no way can this be considered a mitigating factor. Just because many texts and workbooks feature this entire topic in a single chapter—usually the last one—doesn't mean that it's correct. Such a presentation is bad for the following reasons:

It plants the notion with students that punctuation isn't that important since it's teated almost as an afterthought. If students do make such errors in their writings, why should this be considered a "big deal"? Pupils begin to feel that grammar is what's really important, and a few marks of punctuation thrown astray here and there or totally omitted should not detract too much from their writings or their grades.

Instructors often fall behind their proposed teaching schedule for the semester and are barely able to reach the last chapters—often the ones containing punctuation rules. But assuming the instructors stay on schedule, chances are they still have been allotted only a few periods to cover nine marks of punctuation. Is this enough for permanent learning?

How Punctuation Should Be Taught

The inclusion of all punctuation rules in one chapter or lesson violates accepted laws of learning. Instead, these principles should be listed throughout the book or a course in small segments that are constantly stressed in many different reviews. An instructor was informed that I spread the 15 usages of comma rules over the first five chapters of our text although all punctuation rules are listed in the final chapter. His reply was, "What's good enough for the book is good enough for me." This person taught all usages of comma rules in two days; the rest of the week he devoted (?) to the other eight marks. And we wonder why some students have never learned to punctuate properly.

Administrators should be aware of the following circumstances as it pertains to the presentation of formal English grammar in their schools.

1. Teachers are often in a quandary when it concerns the best ways of presenting English grammar. Officials of the National Council of Teachers of English, one of the premier organizations for English teachers, have begun only recently to seriously address this situation. After years of gingerly avoiding grammar methodology, they now recognize they must definitely support the effective teaching of this subject.

At the 1993 national conference in Pittsburgh, more than 1,000 individual papers were submitted covering the entire spectrum of English education. Not one, however, was dedicated to the formal teaching of grammar, snytax, etc. This situation is gradually improving for a group exists under the aegis of the National Council called "assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar." but is it any wonder that many teachers feel uneasy when called upon to present grammar and punctuation.

2. A majority of faculty—even English majors—really don't possess a strong linguistic background. If such persons received one semester of grammar methodology while attending college, they would be the rare exceptions, not the rule.

3. Grammatical classroom instruction in both junior and senior high school is often assigned to beginning teachers. Naturally, these are the least experienced as the more senior faculty usually doesn't want to instruct this subject....and rank does possess its own privileges.

4. Many teachers have had dismal experiences along with limited educational success in prior attempts to instruct grammar. Such sorrowful incidents linger consciously/unconsciously while conducting present classes. Sensing this ennui, students quickly react negatively to a subject they have grown to dislike.

Such pupils literally and figuratively lean back in their chairs with arms crossed over their chests and evidence body language that screams, "We dare you to teach us."

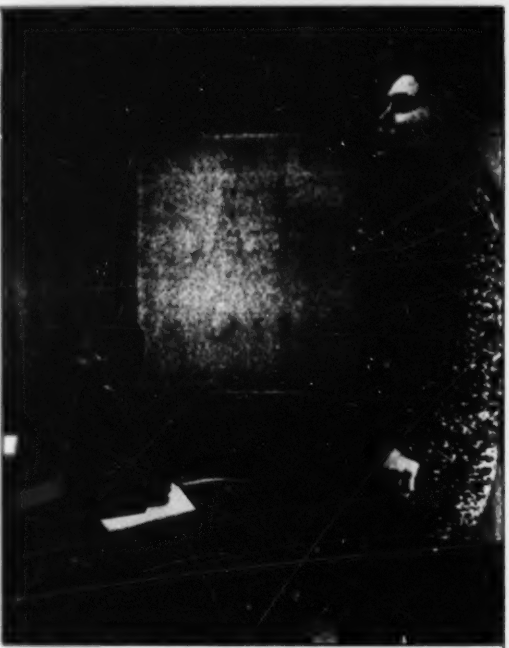
Approaches administrators can use to foster an atmosphere conducive to promoting grammar and writing.

1. Invite employers from several prominent businesses in the community to visit schools and to speak about the importance of English skills—knowledge that is required of their office/secretarial workers. It's such personnel who must transcribe letters and assorted papers and be responsible for clearly and accurately written records. These documents possess no grammatical mistakes, although in the original dictation such errors may have been inadvertently spoken by the firm's supervisors or office managers. Poor grammar and poor punctuation would weaken the overall message of any letter because such distractions would negate what might otherwise be compelling and logical reasons.

2. Request the employer bring an office worker (preferably a graduate of the school being visited) who can relate to the class the worker's first-hand business experiences about the importance of accurate and proper writings. Students then begin to understand how what is being taught in school can make the difference between getting or not getting an excellent job.

3. Ask English and business teachers to create grammatical exercises for advanced students that are similar to work done in private companies.

4. Don't make the teaching of grammar and punctuation the sole responsibility of the English department, as different subject teachers must be involved whenever possible. Composition and term papers for classes in history, science, economics, sociology, psychology—all should bear the grammatical scrutiny of assigning teachers. Grades need to be proportionately lowered for such errors.



The teaching of grammar should not be the sole responsibility of the English department–papers for other classes should bear the grammatical scrutiny of assigning teachers.

Conclusion

Many administrators who read this article and who aren't pleased with the writing and grammatical test scores of their schools may feel that certain changes ought to be considered and then be instituted. It's wise to continue with a system that has proven itself successful, but it is also prudent to explore other options when English inadequacies are deemed so prevalent.

Is anything more important that the ability to converse and to write properly in one's native language?

Alvin Brown is a writing and grammar instructor, now retired (11 Apricot Court, Clifton Park, NY 12065-5425). His book *Mnemonics English Book* has "relevant methods" for teaching grammar. Make checks, $14.95 each copy, payable to *Mnemonics* at his address.

Parent Advocates Can Improve Parent-Teacher Relations

by Patricia Lindauer, Garth Petrie, Lois Gray and Libby Vickers

Introduction

Based on a number of years experience attempting to involve parents in parent-teacher conferences, the authors have concluded that an innovative approach must be taken to encourage reluctant parents to become partners with educators in improving education for all children. The children with the greatest need of parent involvement appear to be those who have traditionally been the ones least likely to have parent participation and satisfactory relations with teachers. The authors discuss a parent advocate program designed to involve and build a sense of security for these reluctant parents.

History of Advocacy

The concept of parent advocacy for parents is a recent one. The concept is designed to inform and encourage nonparticipative parents to become involved in their childis education.

In the past advocacy was thought of as student advocacy in programs such as special education and Title I. Because of various state and federal regulations the concept of student advocacy became very popular. But even before the legislation in the 1980s the idea of advocacy was used in the form of ombudsmen.[1]

A review of the literature indicates that programs with parents advocating for other parents in communicating with the school staff has not been used for iregulari classroom placed students. The purpose of parent advocates is to help children by strengthening parent knowledge and understanding in what is going on in the classroom and what they (parents) can do to help their own children better adjust to and succeed in school. Margolis and Salkind state that it is essential that parents act as advocates for their own children.[2] This is especially true in parent-teacher conference settings. However, many parents may be intimidated by such conferences, and it is in this context that parent advocacy can be especially beneficial. Advocates can benefit parents by being a proponent, supporter or encourager in communications with the school.

Fortunately, not all parents will want or need the services of an advocate. But some will find the idea useful and comforting. This group is sufficiently large not to be ignored.

This advocacy program is not intended to be as confrontational as child advocacy programs that insist on following the iletter of the lawi regardless of what is best for anyone. According to Margolis and Salkind, "A child advocate is any individual who is able to identify and articulate the interests and needs of children, especially in the presence of opposition."[3] Margolis and Salkind also state that many parents do not know their basic rights and therefore may need advocates to help them become more secure and effective in representing the needs and interests of their children.[4] Although there appears to be a need for parent advocates, there are no state or national organizations who have issued guidelines for this type of program.

Why Should Parents and Educators Use Advocates?

Even though educators usually deny that they resist parent participation, or that they too fear parent conferences; there is an estrangement between many parents and teachers concerning open and honest conversations about students.[5] Such estrangement can be a serious impediment to school·improvement efforts and attempts to help individual children. In many cases estrangement creates a distrustful atmosphere in which parents are turned against the school entirely.[6] This estrangement can not only damage the current programs at a poor school but can, over time, literally destroy any hope of the school improving. Already some states, like Kentucky, have passed legislation which allows parents to chose another public school if their local public school is determined to be educationally bankrupt.[7] The caring, supportive parents are the ones most likely to make a mass exodus to greener pasture, leaving the school with a higher percentage of unsuccessful students. Parent advocate programs offer a possible solution to this exodus and could possibly increase the number of supportive parents who also believe in good public schools.

Children from broken homes, single parent families, alternative lifestyles, and who participate in the free and reduced lunch program seem to represent families that are most difficult to get involved in schooling. These are also the families who could benefit most from a parent advocate program. Schools with military families, migrant students, and minority/ethnic populations may also find advantages in a parent advocate project.

There appears to be a need for parent advocates, but as yet no state or national organizations have issued guidelines for this type of program.

Photo by Geri Kodey

However, these settings will probably be the places the program will be most difficult to implement, and it will take patience and istick-to-itivnessi tenacity to get parents to participate.

If parent advocates can provide possible solutions to the alienation between parents and schools, then educators should begin to look at the possibilities such a program offers. It may well provide answers to a serious attitudinal problem while helping parents find new and more comfortable ways to gain information about their child.

There are many ways teachers, parents, and students can benefit from a parent advocacy program. Some of the more obvious benefits are:

1. The teacher can learn about and better understand the child and his/her home environment.

2. The teacher can develop better ways of communicating with the home. By removing the child from the parent-teacher communication loop, information is not as distorted.

3. Teachers and parents can become team players in improving the studentis behavior. In many instances parents do not know how to deal with or discipline their child and would welcome suggestions, advice, and cooperation from the teacher. This can only happen once the parents and teachers know each other personally and not just through stories told by the child.

4. The teacher has an opportunity to influence the goal setting for the child both at home and school.

5. Teachers and parents will jointly be able to set realistic expectations for the child.

6. Students and parents will have a more positive attitude toward school.

7. Students and parents will have a more positive attitude and greater respect for the teacher because of improved parent-teacher communications and relations.

8. With the positive aspects of the parent advocate program the child will probably become a better student academically. Teachers can help parents become partners-in-learning for the child by assisting them in guidelines for study time, quiet time, television viewing, etc.

Advocates must be viewed by both parents and teachers as non-vested and unbiased if they are to be accepted by the two groups.

9. Teachers and parents will learn to appreciate each other on a personal level, thereby developing a greater support base for collaboration and support. For example, parents can now reinforce the behavior they now understand is expected at school. Teachers can support the parent's effort at home because they now understand what the parent is trying to accomplish at home.

10. This program places the teacher, parent, and child in a win-win situation; something all good teachers continually strive for.

It is time we as educators recognize we cannot do the job alone. It is a partnership between home and school.

A Parent's Perspective

Educators would benefit from listening to groups of parents as they discuss their children's schooling. One of the first things they may learn is that a good percentage of parents are concerned that the school staff is not doing what it should be doing for students.[8]

Next, they would discover that some parents feel that they are not wanted at school and that many are frustrated by being unable to find out needed information about their student or how they can best aid him/her in doing better in school.[9] These parental sentiments exist because many parents are intimidated by the school and its faculty or made to feel uncomfortable.[10]

The following scenario from real life exemplifies many parents' feeling. In a dialogue between Mrs. N and her next door neighbor Mrs.

J., Mrs. N declares, "I will never go back to that school. I spent two hours being shuffled from one teacher to the next, and not a soul explained to me why my son, Gary, is failing social studies and science or what I could do to help. Gary's report card was marked "S" (satisfactory) in all subjects last year in third grade. It must be the fourth grade teachers' fault he's failing or they would be able to answer my questions."

Advocates can help teachers develop better ways of communicating with parents.

Mrs. J responds, "Ha!" Are you just now discovering that? I learned to hate school when I was a student in high school. I had trouble with high school algebra because of missing school due to illness. I explained to the algebra teacher that I didn't understand some of the concepts I had missed. He just laughed and said no one else does either. He never took the time to help me. His treatment of me caused me to think all those teachers feel the same way about poor students from broken homes. I made up my mind when Jennifer was born that I wasn't going to that school and be embarrassed again. I am doing all right. If she needs help I'll provide what help I can give her."

Mrs. N responds, "You know, I think I agree with you. I lost half a day's pay and didn't learn a thing to help Gary."

With the parent advocate program the same scenario could have had an ending which more positively affected the parents and the students involved. In a dialogue between Mrs. N and her next door neighbor Mrs. J., Mrs. N declares, 'Last year I had made up my mind to never go back to that school. I spent two hours being shuffled from one teacher to the next, and not a soul explained to me why my son, Gary, was failing social studies and science or what I could do to help. I blamed the fourth grade teacher because he had done satisfactory work in third grade.i

Mrs. J responds, 'Ha! Are you just now discovering that? I learned to hate school when I was a student in high school.

Mrs N. says,"But this year things are really different. The school has a new parent advocate program that really helped me. The advocate contacted me before the conference, helped me decide what I wanted to know from the teacher, and explained some of my rights as a parent. The advocate also helped me, after the conference, to understand what the teacher said I could do to improve Gary's grades. Last year I left the school without a clue as to how to help Gary. This time I felt pretty good about my school visit. It really was worth the half day's pay I lost. Why don't you give the advocate a call and see if she can help you with Jennifer, too?"

Educator Acceptance of the Advocate

Like many new approaches to improving education, the concept of parent advocacy can be frightening to teachers. They may see the advocate as a "lawyer" representing the parent and being antagonistic to the teacher. Such perceptions can certainly weaken a good idea. The fact that educators may deny they do not want parents at school is in itself cause for such fear.[11] The up-side of this resistance is that teachers are usually willing to give new ideas an opportunity. Once they have experienced contact with advocates in a well-planned program, they should see the benefits of the program for students, parents and themselves.

Raywid suggests there are three phases of educational reform: pseudo, incremental, and

Table 1

Parent Advocacy Rules for Two Different Schools

School A	School B
a) Parents contact advocates directly	a) Parents contact advocates through the school guidance counselor
b) Advocates spend 30 minutes helping parents plan the conference.	b) Parents may request the advocate help in planning for the conference.
c) Advocates are observers only during the conference.	c) Advocates use their own judgment in speaking during the conference.
d) Advocates always debrief parents following the conference	d) Advocates discuss the conference at the parent's request.

structural.[12] The third phase of reform, referred to as the structuring phase, calls for collaboration among the faculty and administration and the parents.[13] Because teachers are the educators most involved, they will need to be part of the planning process. Such involvement is particularly important with respect to gaining teacher support. Administrators should choose both parents and teachers to collaborate in the planning phase. Collaboration is essential to most improvement, but nowhere is it more critical than in dealing with the advocacy issue.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Advocate

At least for the time being, there are no commonly accepted set rules or responsibilities for an advocate. Thus, planners of such a program need to spell out the guidelines for this program. However, caution must be exercised so that all involved parties feel they will benefit from the advocacy program. Although situation variables and the existing environment dictate how the role of the advocate is shaped, specific ground rules for the program must be spelled out. The decision concerning the active or passive role of the advocate during the conference will be an individual school decision. The security/insecurity of the teachers will basically dictate whether the advocates play an active or passive role. As teachers become more secure with the advocate program, it is possible the advocate will be encouraged to become more active. The two sets of rules in **Table 1** illustrate possible parameters for advocacy programs.

In one school, advocates are directed to say nothing during the parent-teacher conference. In this situation, where the advocate remains silent during teacher conferences, the advocate usually meets with the parent before the conference and provides counsel regarding communication behavior. The advocate attends the conference and subsequently debriefs the parent about what was said and what is expected. In this role, the advocate primarily provides support and interprets communication.

In other settings, the advocates are spokespersons for parents, doing all or much of the talking. The advocate would meet with the parent before the conferences to devise questions and strategies designed to assist their child. Here too there is a post conference review, at the parent's request, in which the advocate debriefs the parent. Regardless of whether the advocate is active or passive during the conference, the role should be determined in the planning phase, and advocates should be expected to adhere to the guidelines.

Rights and Responsibilities

The behavior of parents, teachers, and advocates should be clearly established prior to conferences. Thus, guidelines in terms of expectations are necessary for all parties. For instance, can any party request that the conference be rescheduled? All parties should be expected to exhibit respectful behavior, and all parties should clearly understand their rights and responsibilities. This outcome is more likely in situations where these matters have been predetermined and appropriately communicated to all parties. Rules governing rights and responsibilities of parents and teachers may include items such as those in **Table 2**.

Note: In no case can a rule be made that is contradictory to local and state board policy.

Table 2

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and Teachers

Parent Expectations of Teachers	Teacher Expectations of Parents
a) Courteous and respectful treatment.	a) Courteous and respectful treatment.
b) Be on time.	b) Be on time.
c) Start conference with positive comments.	c) Not to be defensive.
d) Never have other parties involved in a conference unless the parent is in agreement.	d) Children not to be brought to the conference without prior approval.
e) Documented evidence of student performance.	e) Inform the teacher of any and all information necessary to aid the teacher's work with the child
f) Recommendations for parental support.	f) Follow-through with recommendations.
g) Follow-up from the teacher.	g) Follow-up from the parent.

> **Some parents feel that they are not wanted at school—an advocate can help faculty members make parents feel comfortable.**

Starting a Parent Advocacy Program

When the local school district plans for a parent advocacy program, the following steps should be considered:

Step 1: Appointing a Director and Planning Committee

Someone must be responsible for organizing and guiding the planning committee. The superintendent and board will need to decide if the director position is full or part time and if the position is paid or unpaid. The director needs to identified before the program is even planned so there is continuity in planning, facilitation, and implementation. The director may be an existing staff member with a specific part of their responsibility being the overseeing of the parent advocate program. If the district has a volunteer coordinator, whose salary may be partially paid from Title I funds, (s)he may be asked to oversee the program as part of regular duties. A regular school volunteer may be asked to head-up this program. The selection of the director by the local district will have an impact on the cost factor.

It is critical that the advocacy program planning be done by individuals who are seen by all parties as neutral. The planning team needs to be selected very carefully. All stakeholder groups need to be involved: central office staff, building level administrators, teachers, parents, community members, etc. After the director is appointed and the planning committee is organized, the group must determine the local need for such a program.

Step 2: Establishing the Need for the Parent Advocacy Program

The first thing necessary to establish the need for a parent advocacy program is to determine the approximate numbers of children whose parents could be touched by the advocacy program. One criteria of determining this need is to look at the number of parents involved in parent-teacher conferences at the school. Another criteria for the need of the program is the perception of the parents concerning their involvement in the school. A third criteria could be an assessment of parental complaints. Once the need is determined the committee can decide on the number of advocates to be used.

Step 3: Availability of Funding

Parent advocacy does not have to be an expensive proposition. If school officials see value in the program, they are likely to find ways to create the initiative. For instance, the PTA, the school board, or grant monies, such as Goals 2000, may be used to cover the expense of training advocates.

One aspect of funding is determining the cost factor of the program. Training and advertising will be two factors which must be considered. Another key to the cost of the program is whether advocates will be paid or volunteer. For example, one district which has initiated this program used Goals 2000 monies to pay for advocate training, advertising, and advocate participation on parent-teacher conference days. Six advocates were paid $30 per hour for 12 hours of participation, which amounted to $2,160. Advertising cost for school and community flyers and newspaper announcements cost approximately $300. The total annual cost for the program in this district was less than $2,500. However, one must keep in mind that the size of the district and the number of advocates will determine a large portion of the cost, so there is no way to give an accurate dollar amount.

Step 4: Selecting and Training the Advocates

Advocates can be paid individuals who are trained intensely and become employees of the district. However, if those individuals are not viewed by the parents as non-vested individuals they may not be trusted. By the same token, parent control of the advocate program can cause serious trepidations for educators.

In one district advocates are paid and trained by the district but are selected because they are viewed by parents with strong community ties with no special connection to the school. If these individuals are PTA members, board members, room mothers, or in any way associated with the 'in group' of the school parental trust may be endangered.

Another possible source for parent advocates could be volunteers representative of such community groups as civic organizations, senior citizen groups, military personnel, etc. These individuals offer many immeasurable benefits for the parent advocate program and their vast store of information, skills, and their wonderful gift of hindsight can enhance this program.[14]

The amount of training the advocates will receive depends upon the expressed needs of the district. Active advocates will need more training than advocates who will remain passive during the parent-teacher conferences. Those advocates assigned a more active role in the conference will need training in human relation and conflict resolution skills Regardless of the areas of training, success of the program depends on adequate levels of training.

Administrators need to involve both teachers and parents in the planning phase of an advocacy program.

Step 5: Scheduling the Advocates

The advocate program may start by having advocates serve only during days when parent-teacher conferences are scheduled. Or, advocates may be available on a given day of the week, allowing parents to conference about their child at a time more convenient for them. However, the planners need to understand from the beginning that the program is likely to grow, and this contingency needs to be considered. Otherwise advocates may be unable to meet the growing demand for their services.

Step 6: Informing the Public

Another critical step the district and school's staff must take in exploring the parent advocacy program is to fully explain the program to the public. This does not mean that you send home a note or put an article in the newspaper. It means a full-fledged campaign to inform parents and the public alike.

One of the more important ways to explain the advocacy program is to enlist the support of parents who have already participated. They can explain how the program benefits parents, teachers, and children.

Word of mouth, however, is only one channel for good news. The public relations committee of the school or district also can make valuable contributions. This can be accomplished by highlighting the program in various communications. Successful examples include: letters in the opening of school packets announcing the parent advocate program, notices sent home with students prior to conferences, announcements at PTA/PTO meetings, community and school flyers, inserts in the newspapers, newspaper articles, public radio announcements, radio talk shows, local origination television announcements, local origination town meeting programs, and media bulletin boards on the advocate program.

Step 7: Evaluation of the Advocacy Program

No program should be allowed to begin without a thorough plan for evaluation, and this is especially true of an innovative program. The director of the program or the site administrators should assume the responsibility for conducting a thorough evaluation. The process should be formative (identifying ways to improve) and summative (deciding if the program should be continued). The inclusion of an outside, disinterested party may add to the credibility of the process. However, parents will ultimately decide if the program is worthy. Evaluation should be predicated on realistic goals that accurately reflect the intentions of those who comprise the school's broad community.

Conclusion

A well conceived and executed parent advocacy program can prove beneficial to students, teachers, and parents. Students develop a more positive attitude toward school, which leads to a more positive self concept and a higher level of motivation. Parents acquire knowledge and in some cases skills to use in helping their child as well as building a collaborative partnership for their child's learning. Teachers gain an ally in their efforts to improve the teaching/learning act for all students in their classes. Certainly these benefits provide all with a win-win situation that can only grow as respect and commitment increase.

References

1. Chrispeels, J. (1991). District leadership in parent involvement. *Phi Delta Kappan, 72*(2), 367-71.

2. Margolis, L., & Salkind, N. (1996). Parents as advocates for their children. *Journal for a Just and Caring Education*, 2(2), 103-120.

3. Ibid. p. 104.

4. Ibid.

5. Johns, K. (1992). Lowering beginning teacher anxiety about parent-teacher conferences through role-playing. *The School Counselor*, 40(2), 146-52.

6. Epstein, J. (1984). School policy and parent involvement: Research results. *Educational Horizons*, 62(2), 70-72.

7. Kentucky State Department of Education. (1990). *Kentucky Education Reform Act*. Frankfort, KY.

8. Pardini, P. (1995). Legislating parental involvement. *The School Administrator*, 52(2), 28-31.

9. Mitchell, A. (1993). Shouldn't preschool people advocate for better elementary schools, too? *Young Children*, 48(5), 58-61.

10. McClellan, D. (1995). Implementing the mixed-age classroom. *The MAGnet Newsletter*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. 3(2). Illinois: University Park.

11. Henderson, A. (1988). Parents are a school's best friends. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 70(2), 148-53.

12. Raywid, M. (1990). The evolving effort to improve schools: Pseudo-reform, incremental reform, and restructuring. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72, 139-143.

13. Wehlage, G., Smith, G., & Lipmna, R. (1992). Restructuring urban schools: The new futures experience. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(1), 51-93.

14. Petrie, G., Lindauer, P. & McKinney, R. (accepted for Winter, 1998). Parents, community, and the nongraded primary: Making a successful transition. *Contemporary Education*.

Reference Addresses

Margolis, L., & Salkind, N. (1996). Parents as advocates for their children. *Journal for a Just and Caring Education*, 2(2), 103-120.
Corwin Press, 2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-2218

Johns, K. (1992). Lowering beginning teacher anxiety about parent-teacher conferences through role-playing. *The School Counselor*, 40(2), 146-52.
North Carolina State University, 520 Poe Hall, Raleigh, NC 27695-7801

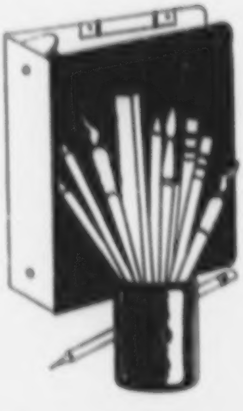
Epstein, J. (1984) School policy and parent invlovement: Research results. *Educational Horizons*, 62(2), 70-72.
4101 East Third Street, P.O. Box 6626, Bloomington, IN 47407-6626.
Kentucky State Department of Education. (1990). Kentucky Education Reform Act. Frankfort, KY, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Pardini, P. (1995). Legislating parental involvement. *The School Administrator*, 52(2), 28-31.
American Association of School Administrators, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209.

Mitchell, A. (1993). Shouldn't preschool people advocate for better elementary schools, too? *Young Children*. 48(5), 58-61.
National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1509 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20036-1426.

McClellan, D. (1995). Implementing the mixed-age classroom. The *MAGnet Newsletter*. ERIC Clearing house on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. 3(2). Illinois: University Park.
University of Illinois, 805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801-4897.

Petrie, G., Lindauer, P. & McKinney, R. (accepted for Winter 1998). Parents, community and the nongraded primary: Making a successful transition. *Contemporary Education*.
Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809. ◆



About the Authors

Patricia Lindauer is the Director of Program Planning and Evaluation for Hardin County, Kentucky, Schools. She is on leave from her district and working as an assistant professor at Georgia Southern University College of Education, Statesboro, Georgia, 30460.

Garth Petrie is a professor of educational leadership at Georgia Southern University.

Lois Gray is the Superintendent of Hardin County, Kentucky, Schools (110 S. Main Street, Elizabethtown, KY 42701).

Libby Vickers is grant coordinator for Hardin County Schools, and as such, directs the Parent Advocate Program.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

America's First Schools Provide a Model of Effective Schooling

by J. Gregory Moran

J. Gregory Moran is headmaster of the Harrisburg Academy, established in southcentral Pennsylvania in 1784. The co-ed day school has an enrollment of 300 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 12.
This commentary appeared in the Harrisburg, Pa., Patriot newspaper, and serves as an example of an excellent mission statement for an educational institution.

A group and I from our school made a recent trip to Washington, D.C., to receive national recognition as part of the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools Program. This occassion gave me an opportunity to reflect upon what factors contribute to effective schooling in the 1990s.

Of the 260 schools honored that year, 207 were public, 36 parochial, eight independent and 19 "other non-public." The independent sector--that is, the traditional private, non-parochial, non-fundamentalist group of schools--is the smallest of these categories and perhaps the least understood. Yet it is the oldest and thus perhaps most distinctively American educational system.

An independent school's effectiveness is judged every day of the school year by the people who foot the bill.

Independent schools pre-date public education by many years; in Pennsylvania a number of independent schools were founded in the 17th and 18th centuries. Their success over such a very long period of time points to an obvious conclusion: America's first schools continue to provide a remarkable model of effective schooling.

Both research and experience tells us that effective education occurs in schools which are characterized by a powerful mix of ingredients. Such schools provide a secure environment that is free of drugs and the threat of violence. They operate on an uninterrupted basis without strikes, extended labor negotiations, public acrimony and other distractions or delays. They are built on a human scale, benefiting from small institutional size and an absence of stultifying bureaucracy.

Accountability to the community permeates the effective school. It has a clear academic mission which is understood by all. Classes are small enough to assure the direct involvement of every student, and teachers have real expertise in particular fields along with a genuine interest in the life of the mind and the healthy development of children.

The emphasis throughout the school is upon academic tasks; achievement is valued and honored by the the entire community. Parents are interested and involved in the school. The principal provides clear, educational leadership that is supported by teachers who value competence over collegiality. The student population reflects the broad contours of America's heterogeneous population, and the school provides a context in which shared values can be promoted.

America's independent schools are frequently misunderstood by the public which views them as elitist institutions available only

J. Gregory Moran is headmaster of the Harrisburg, Pa., Academy and regularly teaches at the 300-student school.

to the privileged few. In fact, most independent schools today are so richly diverse as to make the typical urban or suburban public school look utterly homogeneous. Employing outreach efforts which include a strong commitment to financial aid, today's independent school is providing access to an ever-wider cross-section of the population.

An interest in academic achievement is the defining characteristic of independent school populations, not ability to pay. However, sacrifice is a word most independent school parents understand; priority is another. And herein lies a key to the success of these schools: commitment to quality education.

Apart from diversity and a shared belief in excellence, independent schools as a function of their very nature (1) operate on an uninterrupted basis, (2) have small classes (14-18 students), (3) are built on a human scale which promotes close interpersonal relationships, (4) are free from bureaucracy, (5) issue teacher contracts on a year-by-year basis so as to avoid the tenure trap, (6) make employment decisions on the basis of competence in particular disciplines rather than upon the accumulation of education credits, and (7) are directly accountable to their clients.

The final point seems particularly germane to the debate on educational quality. An independent school's effectiveness is judged every day of the year by the people who foot the bill. Their survival depends upon their ability to provide what parents are seeking for their children: an effective educational environment. The principle of accountability extends from the board (made up largely of current parent volunteers) that hires and evaluated the Head of School down through the institution to each classroom teacher. Market forces--the cleansing winds of competition--effect change where needed and assure a smoothly functioning enterprise.

It has always been thus for the independent school, and that is why the good ones have survived and flourished through good times and bad. Before completely reinventing the wheel in search of educational quality, it might behoove the experts to examine America's most powerful and long-lasting model for effective education: the independent school.

Accountability for student success rests on students and parents as well as educators.

Photo by Michael Siluk

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A report by the Education Commission of the States

What Do Parents and Teachers Think About Education Reform?

In the past year and a half, a research firm commissioned by the Education Commission of the States conducted telephone and focus group studies in school districts in seven states. The purpose of the studies was to learn what "people most affected by the changes" think about education reform efforts.

(The study summary refers to New American Schools. This is a nonprofit corporation "formed by American corporate and foundation leaders." NAS teams have designed improvement programs that are being implemented in schools in San Diego, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Seattle and various districts in Kentucky and Maryland. The study was conducted in those locales where NAS has concentrated its initial efforts. Parents surveyed had voted in recent elections, had at least one child in lower school and had met with their child's teacher or attended a parents' meeting at least once in the prior 12 months.)

The summary of the report follows:

1. Parents rely on teachers and students for information about education.

Where there are important changes happening in schools, district communications offices often focus attention on the media, hoping that parents will get the word through the daily paper or the nightly news. But this survey shows that when parents need to know what is happening in their children's schools, they turn first to the two sources most often neglected in a school's communication efforts — teachers and children.

Almost nine out of 10 parents surveyed say they rely on teachers for information. More than eight in 10 rely on children.

Fewer than seven out of 10 parents say they rely on newspapers for education information, and fewer than half rely on television and radio to learn what is happening in schools.

2. Improving education requires parental involvement.

Teachers and parents alike agree parent involvement is a crucial part of children's education and a key aspect of any education reform effort. But, as with other concepts in education, the idea of parent involvement sounds better in the abstract. In the survey, only four parents in 10 express strong willingness to volunteer in a public school classroom.

In focus groups, teachers and parents frequently mention barriers to effective parent involvement, such as time pressures from work and family, and a general feeling that parents are unwelcome in the classroom. The good news is that teachers and parents, especially those involved in education reform efforts, are working hard at finding new ways to involve parents in their children's education.

Parent involvement means more than being present in the school. In the focus groups, some parents cite getting children up on time, fed, dressed and ready for school as ways to be involved and supportive of their child's schooling. And many parents who are unable to be present in schools take an active role in school-related activities at home, such as monitoring and helping with children's homework.

3. People want change, but disagree sharply over how much and what kind.

There is broad agreement that public schools need to change, but opinion is divided over how and how much. A slim majority of parents (52%) in the target cities think schools need only minor tuning, while four in 10 (41%) call for a complete overhaul.

These parents are deeply divided over what direction the changes should take. Just over one-third want to adopt the best of the new and innovative methods to improve learning. Just under one-third want to go back to the "tried-and-true" basics of education, and the remaining one-third thinks there should be a combination of the old and new methods.

4. Parents believe public schools are on the wrong track — even in their own community.

Traditional wisdom holds that most people think their local schools are fine; it's "those other" schools that need to be improved. But more than half of the parents in this survey say they believe schools in their own community have gotten off on the wrong track; fewer than four in 10 think their local schools are headed in the right direction.

Teachers fare better than schools in general; more than half of parents surveyed grade teachers "A" or "B" on overall performance. Only one in 10 marks teachers' performance as low as "D" or "F." In fact, caring teachers are one of the factors frequently cited by focus-group participants as an example of good things in the schools.

But, while parents say two to one that schools are doing a good job teaching the three "R's, only three in 10 of the parents surveyed think schools are doing a good job teaching problem-solving and disciplined work habits.

5. Parents want higher standards, teachers are not as sure — and most think expecting every child to meet them may be too much.

Parents and, to a lesser degree, teachers, believe schools do not expect enough of students. Six out of 10 parents surveyed say public schools set their standards of performance too low, while only three of 10 find the standards just about right.

Teachers, on the other hand, often focus more on *meeting* high standards than on setting them. Many teachers feel students all too often come to the classroom lacking the home background essential for success.

Many parents and teachers alike have serious reservations about expecting *all* children to achieve at high levels. They worry that, whether because of family and social factors or "innate ability," not all children can excel in school and expecting them to do so is unrealistic and unfair.

6. Accountability for student success rests on parents and students as well as educators.

Holding teachers and administrators accountable for student performance is one of the most popular ideas in education reform, but aspects of it were troubling for parents and teachers in virtually every focus group. There is general agreement that there should be some rewards or consequences for teachers and schools when their students excel or fail in large numbers.

Focus group participants agree there are too many factors outside educators' control to hold teachers fully responsible for student achievement. Both parents and teachers in the focus groups believe strongly that parents and students also hold a large share of the responsibility for students' academic performance.

7. Teachers' professional development is important, but there is disagreement about when it should happen and who should pay.

In the focus groups that explored professional development in detail, parents and teachers agreed that teachers, like other professionals, should have continuing opportunities to develop and hone their skills, They also agree those opportunities should go beyond "inservice days." Teachers need time to collaborate with their colleagues, and to explore a variety of ways to improve their teaching methods, such as working together in teams and providing support for less experienced teachers.

In focus groups that explored the issue, when to schedule professional development opportunities and who should pay for them received mixed responses. Teachers are more likely than parents to say professional development should be made available to them during the course of their regular working day or year (as opposed to adding days during summer) and that the school or district should fund them.

8. Finding out what students know and can do requires a variety of approaches.
As schools change the way they teach children, they also are changing the way they evaluate their progress. While both educators and parents have been frustrated trying to combine traditional standardized tests with newer ways to evaluate children's knowledge and abilities, the focus groups and survey results make it clear that parents and educators believe a combination is the best approach.

In the survey, parents rank the value of portfolios, public displays of student work and standardized testing nearly evenly (33%, 31% and 32%, respectively). Both parents and teachers in the discussion groups point out that standardized tests are efficient and allow for comparison, while qualitative measures can be more meaningful and fair. In the final analysis, many of these parents and teachers think it is useful to use a variety of approaches to gauge the range of a child's abilities and knowledge.

9. Parents and teachers are enthusiastic about the basic ideas of education reform proposals.
Approval is overwhelming for the principles and practices that form the core of New American Schools and other reforms, such as teaching the basics plus more complex skills, learning by doing, increasing parent and community involvement, and providing more local control of schools. More than eight out of 10 parents surveyed give a thumbs-up to many of the strategies put forth by education reformers.

The Basics of NAS Designs

According to the ECS report, these are the major elements of NAS programs:

- Learn by doing
- Involve parents effectively in their children's education
- Give educators increased authority
- Find adequate finances; tap private sectors
- Help parents prepare children "ready to learn" by 1st grade
- Involve community residents
- Emphasize character development
- Use site-based councils for decision-making
- Keep learning materials in adequate supply

10. Parents and teachers are hesitant to believe these excellent ideas for reform can become a reality.
Despite the support for the basic tenets of New American Schools and other education reform efforts, many parents and teachers in the focus groups express strong doubts that such improvement can take hold in their schools.

When asked whether the reforms can work in their own schools, parents and teachers cite lack of commitment from district leadership, the condition of society outside the schools and a belief that these reforms, like countless others in the past, will come and go. As a result, they sense that these ideas, no matter how good, will have difficulty finding a lasting home in their own schools.

The summary is reprinted with permission from Listen, Discuss and Act: Parents and Teachers' Views on Education Reform, published by ECS, 707 17th St., Ste. 2700, Denver, CO 80202-3427. Copyright 1996 ECS. All rights reserved. The complete book is available (ask for AN-62-2) from ECS for $10 plus postage. Phone 303-299-3692.

School Foundations:

Organize to Seek Out a Variety of Contributors

by Michael Page Miller

Everyone loves cheerful givers. But, where do you find them? Local education foundations are vital to the health and future of our school and our communities. Yet, if you are a leader or a board member of one of these funds, you know that raising money is rarely easy and often exhausting. Good money, alas, does not "naturally" follow good deeds. Cheerful givers are too few and too far between.

But, why should your givers by cheerful? Whey should they be donors at all?

Is one of these your answer? "Because they are parents with children who should appreciate the benefits of our program." "Because they are successful alumni who should want to pay back." Because they run local businesses and should be concerned about their future employees."

Unfortunately, in fund raising "should" is a low-return proposition. There is no currency in "should." You, the asker, are trying to supply the donor's motivations. However, you are not writing the check.

Here is the real issue: What do your prospective donors want? It is their motivations that count. What will make your parents, alums and local business leaders cheerful givers? There is only one way to find out — ask them. In short, do a market assessment.

In a well-developed, community-based fund raising program, 10% of the donors will give between 60-70% of the dollars. For this reason, your marketing assessment or study must target donors with the potential to make large gifts, and those willing to become leaders of your foundation (and help get the large gifts).

You can do an assessment whether your school foundation is just getting started or has been around for five years. The assessment will:

- Tell you what your prospects value — and what they don't.
- Educate, involve and cultivate prospective top donors and leaders for your foundation.
- Guide you in developing strategies for successful fund raising or for preparing to launch a new foundation.

Key questions

Your marketing study is intended to help you answer the following critical questions:

1. **Case**–what are the most compelling arguments for your foundation? Do potential leaders and donors understand and agree with these arguments? How might these arguments vary for different constituencies such as parents or local businesses?
2. **Needs and programs**–what are seen as the major needs your school function should address? What types of programs should the foundation support? Which proposed or existing programs are off the mark?
3. **The school system**–how do respondents view your school system and its leadership? What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses?
4. **Foundation reputation**–if your foundation is already going, how do respondents view your programs, management, board leadership, organizational capacity and the like? What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses?
5. **Leadership and the board**–are your board leaders, or potential leaders, willing and able to take on major fund raising roles? Are there other individuals with significant clout who are ready to be recruited onto your board? Will these key volunteers accept solicitation assignments and work

One shold not assume that certain groups of people would not contribute to an educational foundation. This senior citizen, being assisted by a student in a community service project, could be receptive to a funding request.

Photo by Michael Siluk

effectively to make the foundation a success?

6. **Goal**–is your proposed fund raising goal realistic? Too high? Too low? Are there indications of lead gifts, as reflected in a gift range chart, to support the proposed goal? If not, what would be a realistic but still challenging goal?

7. **Sources of support**–are your constituents willing and able to make thoughtful and significant financial contributions to the campaign? Where should you concentrate your fund raising: parents alumni, local businesses, major corporations and foundations (if there are any in your community)? Are the potential board members ready to make personally significant gifts?

8. **Public relations**–what types of public relations and donor cultivation activities should you undertake to enhance your fund raising? What should be the focus or themes? What needs or accomplishments should be featured? What public perceptions about your foundation or the school system need to be modified or enhanced?

Interviews

The heart of your study will be a series of about 15-25 interviews. If your education foundation has been active for several years, your best approach is to engage an independent fund raising consultant to conduct and evaluate these interviews. The answers you get will be more candid, the analysis more informed.

In selecting interviewees, you are looking for the following: capacity to make a large gift combined with a linkage or relationship to the school system. If the wealthiest family in town does not have a meaningful relationship with your school system, take them off the list.

Your list will include selected parents, alumni and local business leaders. Depending on your community, it also may include executives from grant-making foundations. In addition, you want to interview a few people

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

who may not be major gift prospects, but who have a knowledge of the community, the school system and its leadership.

The interviews will last about 45 minutes to an hour and should be done in person. A questionnaire (see next subhead) is critical to help guide the interviewer, but the atmosphere should be informal. In addition, the interviewer will ask the prospect to comment on a draft mission statement, a one-page list of proposed (or actual) foundation-sponsored projects, and a proposed gift range chart.

Your market assessment may or may not uncover a trove of cheerful givers. You may even uncover some "bad news" that may cause you to adjust your plans. Most likely, you will be surprised by the depth of support and the interesting ideas you find. But, most certainly, you will discover what it takes to secure large gifts for your school foundation. These are the gifts that can make a real difference to the children of your district. You will know how to get these gifts because the people who could give them will tell you. What more can you ask?

Marketing assessment interview questionnaire

The following is a sample major gifts and leadership marketing questionnaire for a new foundation. These questions guide the interviewer. In addition, the interviewer will ask the prospect to comment on a draft mission statement, a one-page list of proposed (or actual) foundation-sponsored projects and a proposed gift range chart. For an already-existing foundation, the interviewer also must ask questions about the foundation's programs, leadership and staff.

A group of community leaders in Anycity is planning to start a nonprofit foundation to raise private dollars to enrich educational opportunities in its public schools. The goal is to help Anycity maintain its commitment to excellence in education. We are conducting this study to assess the depth of community support for the foundation and to identify potential board members, contributors and projects to be sponsored by the foundation.

1. **Public education today.** How would you describe the mission of public education in our society? What are the most critical issues confronting public education today? How well do you think the Anycity public schools are responding to the challenges? How do you think Anycity measures up to other school systems?

2. **Involvement/memory.** When did you/your child attend? How would you rate the education received? As a parent/alumni, what is your most meaningful experience or memory of the school?

3. **Education foundations and case.** Do you know/have your heard about school foundations? Do you have any general thoughts about this idea? Do you believe that Anycity should establish a foundation? What do you think is the most compelling case for establishing a foundation for Anycity schools?

4. **Mission statement.** Here is a draft mission statement for the new foundation. What is your reaction to it? What are its strong points. What are its weaknesses?

5. **Programs and priorities.** The foundation would begin by raising funds for a few specific projects that will be selected by its board of directors. Here is a list of proposed project. How would you prioritize them? Is there any project that should not be here?

6. **The board.** What types of people do you think we should look for to serve on the foundation's board? Do any particular people come to mind who might be appropriate to serve? Who else should we talk to about potential board members?

7. **Goals and gifts.** We are testing a first-year fund raising goal of $100,000. Do you believe this is attainable? Too high? Too low? Why? What questions does it raise?

As outlined in this gift range chart, to achieve this goal the foundation would need to attract top gifts between $1,000 and $20,000. Do you have suggestions as to who within the school system's community might make gifts in the higher ranges?

Are there local businesses or corporate headquarters that might support the foundation? Do you know anyone there? Are there foundations you believe would be prospects for

School Foundation
Sample Gift Range Chart
Goal - $100,000

Gift Range	# of Gifts	# of Prospects	Total for Range
$20,000	1	5	$20,000
$10,000	2	8	$20,000
$5,000	4	16	$20,000
$1,000	20	60	$20,000
$500	20	60	$10,000
$20 to $250	Many	Many	$10,000

contributions? Do you have a relationship with them?

8. Your own involvement. Have you served on nonprofit boards? What has your experience been? Have you been involved in fund raising? (Selectively) Would you consider serving on the board?

Would you personally consider contributing to the foundation? Would your gift fall in any of the ranges we've been discussing? (If respondent is uncertain about gift) What would you want to know before committing yourself to a gift?

Would you be willing to contribute some of your own time to helping the foundation? For example, in fund raising or helping develop projects?

9. Others to interview. Are there others who you think would be important to interview for this study? Potential board members? Contributors? For additional insights into the needs of the community?

Gift range chart

The gift range chart outlines how you expect to meet your fund raising goal. The chart reflects that in a fund raising campaign, a small minority of donors at the top will give the majority of fund. In this example, for a new foundation, the top gift is 20% and the next two are 10% each. A lack of large gifts at the top cannot be made up by many small gifts at the bottom. After a few years, as a strong fund raising program expands and a broader constituency develops, the top gift may represent only 5-10%.

Michael Page Miller is regional associate director and senior faculty member of the Fund Raising School, and a founding partner of Miller/Rollins (headquartered in New York), helping nonprofit leaders in fund raising management and planning. Miller/Rollins clients include the Fund for New York City Public Education (the nation's largest public education fund raising organization), and the National School Boards Association. This article is reprinted through the courtesy of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (774 Limekiln Rd., New Cumberland, PA 17070. Subscription is $65 per year).

Case Study

The Caring Carringtons Muster Their Class Clique

A new elementary plan meets stiff opposition from an influential group of parents.

by Debbie McKinney

The Carrington family was a powerful dynasty in Walnut Grove. Tyler Carrington's father owned a large ostrich ranch outside of town and Tyler, himself, was a successful attorney, responsible for many of the legal dealings within Peach Groves County. He and his wife, Carrie, were also noticeable active in the community. Most residents in Walnut Grove were aware of the clout carried by the Carrington name, although the family never openly flaunted their wealth. Perhaps this is why their influence was so far-reaching.

Carrie's civic work was extensive. Not only did she serve on various committees throughout the community, she was highly involved in the public schools that her children attended. She had been president of the PTA, a room mother, and a member of the School Improvement Team; and contributed much in time and money to the school. As the mood struck her, she would wear a Raggedy Ann clown costume with full face makeup and prance through the halls of the school at lunchtime just to brighten everyone's day.

Like most parents, the Carringtons wanted only the best for their children, Derek and Linda. The youngsters were well behaved and capable, yet were not academic superstars. They seemed to be overshadowed somewhat by their mother's strong, sometimes intimidating, personality.

> ***The elementary school addressed the needs of bilingual and economically depressed students, as well as those from advantaged families.***

Walnut Grove Elementary, Linda and Derek's school, was unique. Located in one of the most prestigious areas in town, across the street from Aspen Heights where many professional and influential people lived, it addressed the needs of a group of bilingual and economically disadvantaged children from other parts of the town. This diverse population created a challenge to the principal who was responsible for equity in education. Mostly wealthy parents were active in the school, often excluding others who were not of their own clique.

Into this school walked Phillip Holland, the new principal, who eagerly anticipated making broad changes for the better in Walnut Grove Elementary. After studying the situation at the school, he could see exactly what improvements were necessary. He planned to increase achievement scores by changing the classes from like student or homogeneous grouping to dissimilar or heterogeneous grouping, revamp the recognition system, and update the curriculum with the proper use of technology. Although it would be a challenge, he was convinced that these changes would improve the school. A switch to vertical teaming was scheduled for later, but he was ready to implement the other three transformations immediately.

It was not unusual to have visitors directly after a new principal's arrival, he knew. And although most had come to welcome him, he could quickly see a pattern developing that constituted much more than a simple welcome. He began to understand that the parents were accustomed to approaching the principal with their choice of teacher for their child. They wanted their children in the "gifted" classes or with the "right" teacher. On the other hand, some of the parents had already complained about the children in gifted classes receiving special privileges. This practice set up an unfair system, especially with regards to the diverse population within the school.

Most Walnut Grove residents were aware of the "Carrington Clout," although the family never openly flaunted their wealth.

Phillip Holland decided to play the game for now, because his predecessor had obviously catered to the parents. Beginning in January, however, he would begin his planned changes. Perhaps by then the School Improvement Team could be persuaded to support heterogeneous grouping. Meanwhile, the recognition of students and technology would move forward. Requirements for the Honor Roll had to be reevaluated and changed to include additional children, especially those from low income homes. Grant applications must be written to raise money for additional computers in the classroom, and the teachers must be trained to use them.

As the school year progressed, tensions in the school community increased. By January, the honeymoon was over. The Recognition subcommittee of the School Improvement Team had been formed and their focus became an emotional issue. After lengthy negotiations, a recognition system was finally developed by consensus, but not without bitter feelings among the committee members.

Shortly after this, another ad hoc committee called Grouping was formed. Some individuals, including teachers, tried to dissuade Principal Holland from tackling the issue at this particular time, but he insisted on taking a stand for what he believed was best for the children. He appointed the committee members to achieve equal representation of the various ethnic groups within the school.

The committee consisted of a teacher at each grade level, three additional teachers, a representative from central administration, and eight parents, including minority representatives and a local pastor. The principal also asked an outside professional facilitator to lead the meetings. Team norms were established by the third meeting. Everyone agreed that the proper channels would be followed, and that this team would make the final decision on how to group the students for instruction so that all of them would reach their potential.

Each step was handled with kid gloves straight from the book. By the end of January, Principal Holland had made clear his concept of what was best for the students, introducing research materials and several articles and videos supporting his philosophy regarding mixed grouping. It seemed so sensible to him that the team should support this change because research indicated it was best for the children.

On Feb. 1, an agitated Carrie Carrington activated the community grapevine.

"How dare Principal Holland come in and not allow us to choose our child's teacher!" she indignantly exclaimed to her friend, Jennifer. "We have a right to choose! Besides, the slower learners would slow the learning pace of our children, and I'm not going to have my children be the sacrificial lambs."

"I agree with you completely," Jennifer Cormac responded. Then she added, her voice rising, "Did you go to Sally's birthday party last week? There was one child there who was using foul language and another one actually hit John Beaumont and made his nose bleed. I don't want my Fred associating with children like that. Something must be done!"

Carrie and her friends went to the principal, explaining their point of view, but to no avail. He politely refused to listen. He had even contacted a more amenable member of the Carrington grapevine, Betty Livingston, several times to persuade her to adopt his point of view and influence her friends.

During the first contact, Betty had responded to him carefully.

"You must know how upset I am with the new grouping idea. I'm terribly concerned that my children and others will become the sacrificial lambs of the school, and my husband and I don't want to see that happen. We're concerned that should heterogeneous grouping take place, it would slow the learning rate for our children."

Holland knew this was coming and he was ready. "I understand your concern, Betty. All changes are scary because they are different. As the principal of this school though, it is my job to see to it that the needs of ALL children are met, and not just those of a certain few."

"I understand that," Betty replied, "However, as a parent, it's my job to be here for my children. And I'm still not convinced that mixed grouping is best for them."

The principal persisted, "I want you to know that this decision should be based on the latest research about how children learn. This is not just my personal opinion. I have an information packet I'd like you to read regarding the research."

"I don't think it will change my mind, but I'll read it," Betty agreed.

Phillip Holland would not give up. He called her back the next day.

"I can appreciate your point of view, and I've read the research," she stated, more than a little frustrated, "but I just cannot buy it. My husband and I have worked hard to be able to send our children to a private school when they were younger, and now that they are in the public schools, we just hate to see that investment wasted."

"Are you telling me that you think all of our teachers can't teach all the children? All of our teachers are trained to teach the gifted students."

"Not at all," Betty interrupted, "I'm saying that research can be found to support homogeneous grouping, too."

"I cannot group children according to zip codes," Phillip protested. "Perhaps you are confusing the words 'fair' and 'equitable' in some of your interpretations."

In the end, Betty could not be persuaded. They agreed to disagree.

Meanwhile, Carrie Carrington had formed her own committee of parents who shared her opinion. Called "Concerned Parents," they met at the county library, did their own research, and sent letters of petition. Their research paper supporting homogeneous grouping was given to a member of the Grouping committee for presentation.

During the next Grouping meeting, Principal Holland became an emotional advocate of his plan. He knew which members of the formal committee were also in the Concerned Parents group created by Carrie and her followers. Feeling strongly about this issue, he passionately addressed the committee until he was to the point of tears and had to excuse himself. In this emotion-laden atmosphere, a teacher spoke up saying that she felt it was wrong for the other committee members to take matters into their own hands. Order was restored and other speakers, their voices intense with feeling, were heard.

Meanwhile, Carrie Carrington was satisfied with her work. The petitions were bringing in a stream of support and their letter to the editor had been printed in the Walnut Reporter. Principal Holland had responded to it indicating

Principal Holland was determined to switch the students from homogeneous to heterogeneous groupings.

that the board supported his plan.

The whole climate of the school was affected by the dissension. What was a happy, congenial school was now full of tension and discord. Parents were unhappy and teachers were also since time-tested lesson plans would have to be altered. The Concerned Parents committee urged everyone to lodge a complaint with school board members; the formal Grouping committee could not function; and the teachers were in the middle, confused about the new plan and how it would affect their work.

Everyone wanted the best for all of the children. But precisely how this should be defined was yet to be determined. Phillip Holland, on the other hand, believed that he knew. He cared deeply about the children and wanted the best for them, including those children of parents who would not go to bat for them. He did not want to cater to a select few, no matter who they were or how much money they paid in taxes.

He had a responsibility to be equitable to all. With missionary zeal, he had pursued his goals, and now, when he had an opportunity to accomplish them, he could not accept defeat. What he needed was massive support, and a plan to gather and sustain it.

Debbie McKinney, a former administrator, is a teacher in the Conroe Independent School District in Conroe, Texas.

Issue's Case Study Response

A Sound Position Needs Support

by Billy L. Young

In this case study, Principal Holland needs support for his student grouping plan. This support is within his grasp and it consists of his teachers, their students, and those parents who have a vested interest in the school. These parents and their children come from the bilingual area across town and from other areas as well. Though their children may be doing extremely well in the school, they do not have the political or economic clout to compete with the Carrington's and their social clique.

As the new principal at Walnut Grove Elementary, Phillip Holland wants to make broad changes. Although his ideas and plans have merit, his staff lacks training in affecting them. They are confused about the new approach and concerned about their jobs.The problems that he encounters were a result of not keeping his staff informed, attempting to implement changes in a short period of time, and not listening to his staff.

He can overcome this adversity by implementing the following:

- Make only those initial changes that will not disturb the orderly running of the school.
- Develop in-service for all teachers; have those in the district who are familiar with heterogeneous teaching teach the staff; and conduct teacher visits to other schools with heterogeneous grouping.
- Determine a realistic date. The confusion of scheduling among his staff will defeat the program at the start.
- Set in-service days for the summer and keep the staff informed of goals, progress, and so forth.
- Communicate the program to all involved (students, teachers, administrators, and school board and community members).

Finally, Principal Holland has no control over what the clique parents might do. The parents are concerned for their children and what they believe is right for them. This is an understandably narrow focus. On the other hand, the principal's focus is on the welfare of all students in the school. This is a sound position for Phillip Holland.

Billy Young is an assistant principal in Bryan Independent School District, Bryan, Texas.

Case Studies are edited by Philip T. West, professor emeritus, Texas A&M University, Harrington Education Center, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Developing a Strategic Marketing Plan for a Rural School District Requires Partnership With the Community

"Pleasant Plain; A safe place to live, work, educate and raise a family"!

by doctoral students, Wichita State University

That could be the slogan for a small, rural, midwestern town, if school district officials heed the recommendations of a research group from a local university.

In assessing the district's needs and goals, the researchers toured the town and surrounding area, including all schools and several local businesses. They reviewed school district documents and municipal, county, and state reports. Local citizens and community leaders, parents new to the district, and students were involved in group focus sessions.

Five major findings emerged from these sessions relating to the numerous advantages that the citizens believed the community offered:

- Safety. Both students and parents indicated that the schools were safe and that they felt secure within their environment. New residents noted that safety was a reason to come to Pleasant Plain.
- High quality schools. This factor was considered to be a strength of the community. Advantages of the small rural school cited were low pupil-teacher ratios, close personal relationships with teachers, great opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, a solid preparation for college, and the availability of scholarships. Schools were an important factor in the new residents' decisions to move to Pleasant Plain.
- Small town life. The Pleasant Plain school district and community have the positive attributes of small town life.
- Sense of community. Pleasant Plain residents shared a sense of community and cared about its well being. This attribute requires the integration of marketing plans with community strategic plans.
- A vital school enrollment. Secondary data analysis indicated that 20% of students in Pleasant Plain schools were new to the community in the past two years.

Based on its findings, the research team recommended the development of a comprehensive marketing plan for the community of Pleasant Plain, including the school district. It was further recommended that a community team implement a strategic plan to bring controlled growth to the area. Two questions were to be addressed:

1. What strategies will increase the number of new families with school-age children in the community?
2. What strategies ensure that the needs of current families with school-age children will continue to be met?

The perceived major drawing cards for rural school districts are the safety of a "small town," the high quality of schools, and a strong sense of community. The major weaknesses in attracting new families include the lack of available housing and employment opportunities in the community. Eight steps were recommended for developing a school district marketing plan: conducting a market analysis, defining advantages and new programs for a target market, setting goals for enrollment and marketing, determining the methods and types of marketing, designing specific tactics, conducting pilot tests, setting performance checkpoints, and evaluating the campaign.

- **Conducting a Market Analysis.** First, the school marketing committee should determine the district's current strengths and weaknesses, then identify the reasons that families new to the district chose to move into the area. Next, the marketing committee should identify the characteristics of families who live outside of the district and their unmet educational needs, and the strengths and weaknesses of other school districts. Finally, the committee should analyze the collected information.

- **Defining the District's Advantages and New Programs for the Target Market.** By clearly determining the district's benefits and lacks, the committee can help the district develop new school programs to meet the needs of families that the community would like to attract.
- **Setting Enrollment and Marketing Goals.** Enrollment goals for the district should be based on the status of the school's capital investments, the existing school budget, staffing, and school facilities. The goals of the community's strategic plans for housing families and community support services will also influence enrollment decisions.
- **Determining How to Market.** Decisions must be made on the types of promotions, media services, printed materials, and meetings that the committee and others will pay for, develop, distribute, and conduct. Those targeted to receive the messages and the channels used to deliver them must be identified.
- **Designing Specific Tactics.** The marketing committee must design specific tactics, identify the members accountable for implementing them, and establish a timeline for each.
- **Conducting Formal Pilot Tests.** Pilot tests for the marketing plan should be made to evaluate how the parts will interact.
- **Establishing Performance Checkpoints.** Checkpoints can determine when and how to assess the marketing campaign's progress.
- **Evaluating the Campaign.** The marketing committee should assess the success of the marketing plan. For example, one criteria for determining the success of the plan in Pleasant Plain could be enrollment increases.

The study team recommended that the school district involve no more than 10-12 representatives from the schools and the community on a marketing planning committee. Before this committee begins its work, the members should consider the potential impact that a successful marketing plan may have on relationships with neighboring districts. Strong competitive actions may prompt neighboring districts to assume a less cooperative posture, when cooperation (as well as competition) can be essential for small districts.

The success of the marketing plan depends on the solid support and commitment of school personnel and students. Pleasant Plain School District administrators provide the marketing committee with names of interested personnel and students who will help implement the plan. Throughout the planning activities, the committee should communicate frequently with this group of educators and students to receive and use their feedback.

Before they begin planning the pilot testing, the committee should agree, when possible, on each step, activity, service, or product to be created or implemented. Feedback received by the marketing committee will form an information base for improving the plan and increasing the possibilities of reaching enrollment goals. The marketing planning process should become a continuous cycle of school district activities. It will be necessary to repeat the cycle every two-three years because of rapid change in the school district's environment.

Seven steps were recommended by the field study research team to develop a community strategic plan. These are organizing to begin planning, creating a vision, defining the community's profile, comparing the present with the vision, setting goals, planning action, and monitoring and reviewing the goals and plans.

- *Organizing for Planning.* This first step determines members and the leader of the steering committee for the planning process. All stakeholder groups in the community should be represented on this committee.
- *Creating a Vision.* This requires the participation of community members to imagine a desirable future for their community and build a shared image reflecting that.
- *Defining a Community Profile.* As a "picture of the community," the profile includes a comparison with local, state, and national trends and identifies the strengths and weak-

nesses of the community. It also includes the identification of trends, issues, and opportunities.

- *Comparing the Present with the Future Vision.* The current conditions existing in Pleasant Plain are compared with the shared vision created in the planning process. This should identify gaps that will point out issues to be examined in the development of goals.
- *Setting Goals.* The Pleasant Plain strategic plan goals should include targeted topics such as marketing the schools, stimulating economic development, increasing services, and creating job opportunities.
- *Planning Action.* An action plan identifies the steps that must be taken to achieve goals. A plan should include the goal statement, strategies necessary for achieving the goal, person(s) responsible for the strategies, timelines for implementation and completion, a list of necessary resources, and an evaluation process.
- *Monitoring and Continuing the Process.* Strategic planning is not static and has no clearly identifiable ending. Monitoring should include a built-in feedback loop. This is usually included in the evaluation process outlined in the action plans. Lines of communication must remain open between and among the community team and the subcommittees that are working on various action plans, often concurrently. A continuous process for reviewing current goals and action plans, and adjusting those goals and plans to meet the changing needs of the community and schools, should also be part of the plan.

This research article was authored by Melva M. Owens, Willis J. Furtwengler, Randall L. Turk, Carol Furtwengler, and David Hurst with contributing authors David Brax, Joseph Harrison, Fred Matren, and Steven Wyckoff, all of the fall 1995 doctoral program in educational administration at Wichita State University (Wichita Kansas 67208).

by Arthur W. Stellar

Books for review and requests to serve as a guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, superintendent, Kingston City Schools, 61Crown St., Kingston, NY 12401.

Get Elected, Make a Difference!

By Rich Becker. Pump-Em-Up in Publishing, P.O. Box 14934, Shawnee Mission, KS 66285. 1996.

Here is a book for those interested in running for office (or helping others run) or in passing a public referendum, like a bond issue or a budget vote.

The author, a state representative, has written about the practical process of getting elected and interjects his own views and stories throughout each chapter. For example, pictures of the author with famous politicians, as well as quotes from various elected officials, are in almost every chapter. The repetition and images create a picture of a well-connected and knowledgeable, public-spirited political figure.

The main focus of this work, however, is the "how to" of being elected to public office. The content is crammed with details and tactics and the advice is straightforward. Candidates are given timelines for planning their campaigns after organizing themselves, their families, friends, and steering committee. The author gives practical information about researching issues, preparing a budget, raising funds, conducting polls, preparing mailings, securing publicity, dealing with volunteers, and bringing out the vote.

The only criticism of note is that there is some redundancy. Readers may not mind though, because the writing comes across as a conversation with a big-hearted person, who does not think politics is a nasty profession. He believes politics is a way to help constituents. This book can assist those who want to make a difference by holding public office or promoting the passage of a public referendum.

Beyond the Classroom: Why School Has Failed and What Parents Need To Do.

By Laurence Steinberg. Simon and Schuster, Rockefeller Center, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020. 1996.

Author Steinberg provides substantial rationale for parents to be more active with their children's educational progress. The primary reason, according to this researcher, is that parents and peer groups influence students more than educators.

This conclusion is based upon Steinberg's national research regarding adolescents both inside and outside of schools. He claims that schools are not particularly deficient nor are most educators incompetent. The key is that parents need to care about their children's learning and positively demonstrate that concern to their own children.

Parents play a role in what peer group their youngsters will have access to. They "launch" children in a general direction during the elementary school years. They also determine "the territory" of the peer group by choosing where the family lives, what schools the children attend, and what activities they are allowed to join.

One other potent factor in the lives of high school students is how time is spent outside of school in extracurricular activities, social events, and employment. In this study, employment of over 20 hours a week brings achievement levels down dramatically. Actively involved parents can set parameters in these areas for their children.

The arguments for increased parental involvement are well advanced by the author. His points about failed educational reform are much weaker. In spite of this flaw, however, this book is well worth reading for those interested in adolescents.

Communicating Student Learning.

By Thomas Guskey, ed. ASCD Yearbook 1996. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1996.

Educators have been struggling to appropriately communicate student progress to parents and the public at large. Controversy surrounds grading, report cards and other means of communicating the quality and quantity of learning by individuals, as well as groups of students. School officials who deal with the public regularly confront, or are confronted by, this perplexing issue.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development authorized this yearbook topic for four reasons: "First, the growing emphasis in education on student performance and performance-based forms of assessment...second, the growing criticism of education and a skeptical public that doubts the quality of what is going on in schools and the capabilities of educators. Third, advances in technology that present many new challenges, but also offer many new opportunities...fourth, a growing recognition that grading, reporting and communicating student learning are one of educators' most important responsibilities." The second rationale for this book is clearly the weakest, although the material for the other reasons more than compensate.

Sound methods of Communicating Student Learning seem to be based upon sharing knowledge with interested persons so they can understand and use it, reporting what has been learned and what remains left to be learned, and more detailed and better quality information to match increasingly complex school goals.

This book reminds the reader of the historical perspective regarding the reporting of pupil progress. It tackles complex matters like reporting student learning for special education students, students engaged in cooperative learning groups, and gifted students. It treats the communicating of visual arts programs, the differences between elementary and secondary student progress reporting systems, authentic assessment, and the promise of technology.

Technology may hold the key as to how educators can respond to the "customer needs" for information about student learning with multiple ways customized for different users. This chapter is particularly helpful in thinking about developments that might occur over the next 10 years or so.

Every few years, most school districts review the manner in which student learning is communicated to parents and others in the community. This volume is an excellent resource because it combines research and practice on this important topic. While it does not lay out all the answers, it seems to provide most of the areas which need to be discussed.

The Loyalty Effect: The Hidden Force Behind Growth, Profits, and Lasting Value.

By Frederick Reichheld with Thomas Teal. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA 1996.

Business models and practices have been a source of ideas for school personnel for some time. Total quality management concepts, including customer service, are increasingly being incorporated into school district procedures. Parents are the school district's equivalent of customers. At the same time, some businesses have moved on to higher plateaus of dealing with customers. Based upon the truism that "Customers either come back for more or they go elsewhere," a few companies have created an approach that could be labeled "Loyalty Based Management."

This book was written by a director in the Bain Company, a worldwide consulting firm. The contents reflect what consultants with that company have learned as they helped their clients improve their retention of customers. One of the Bain findings was that loyalty to customers produced loyalty from customers. They discovered that loyalty was a critical ingredient for employees, and stockholders as well. Customers, employees, and stockholders as a whole constitute what the Bain Company consultants refer to as "human inventory."

Inventories on experienced customers, employees, and investors are a company's most valuable assets, according to the authors. "The combined knowledge and experience comprise a firm's entire intellectual capital... you cannot control a human inventory, which, of course, has a mind of its own, so you must earn its loyalty."

If loyalty is a better predictor of long term success than market share or cost of service quality, then what does it mean for a business to promote loyalty? "Here we strike bedrock, because creating value for customers is the foundation of every successful business system. Creating value for customers builds loyalty, and loyalty in turn builds growth, profit, and more value." Many business techniques are dismissed by educators because education is not profit driven. Loyalty, however, is value driven and should therefore have added appeal to educators.

Business loyalty leaders such as State Farm Insurance, Lexus, and John Deere base their operations upon the creation of value for those they serve, the authors write. Schools would do well to emulate a similar approach with parents, students, employees, and taxpayers. That would be effective public relations and would promote loyalty.

Photo Credits

Addresses for photographers whose work we are using in Vol. 18, Nos. 2 and 3:

Michael Siluk
1000 3rd St., NW
New Brighton, MN 55112
612-636-5843

Geri Kody
Clark County Schools
4212 Eucalyptus Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89121
702-799-5442

Shirley Haley
1834B Westview
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

Robert Finken
9421 Tuxford Road
Richmond, VA 23236

Other photographs in this issue are by the publisher.

1997 *Journal* Editorial Review Board

Larry Ascough, Elgin, IL
Don Bagin, Rowan College, Glassboro, NJ
William J. Banach, Banach, Banach, Cassidy, Ray, MI
B. Dean Bowles, University of Wisconsin
Carolyn H. Chapman, Univ. of Nevada, Reno
Marsha Chappelow, Overland Park, KS
Floyd Coppedge, State Secretary of Education, OK
Larry E. Decker, Florida Atlantic University
Don Gallagher, professor emeritus, Rowan College
Mel Heller, Loyola University, Chicago
Anne L. Jefferson, University of Ottawa
J. William Jones, PECO Energy Co., PA
Theodore J. Kowalski, Ball State University, IN
William Allan Kritsonis, Lake Charles, LA
Tami James Moore, University of Nebraska, Kearney
Frances Powell, Duval Co. Public Schools, FL
Donna M. Schmitt, Eastern Michigan University
I. Sue Shepard, Southeast Missouri State University
Harriett Stonehill, Megaskills Education Center, Washington, DC
Arthur W. Stellar, Kingston Schools, NY
Philip T. West, Texas A&M
Charles L. Willis, Dayton, OH
Brenda Williams, College of William and Mary, VA

Journal of Educational Relations
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657

BULK RATE
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT 152
CAMP HILL, PA
17001-0657

The Journal of Educational RELATIONS

PS 026911

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships

Vol. 18 No. 3

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

School Students Today; Non-Voters, Non-Supporters Tomorrow

A theme running through much of the June 1997 *Kappan* dealt with an apparent need to reincorporate the public in public education (before its many foes manage to topple it in favor of a myriad of charter schools, vouchers to private and parochial school parents and aid/support to for-profit institutions).

And in the mail a short time later was a report (from NSPRA) about a super-extra-effort to pass a referendum in Tacoma, Washington. The capital project levy was finally approved by voters. However, a follow-up report revealed that a good number of school employees **did not even vote** in the elections, and that special efforts will be made this year to win their support.

Can I call reader's attention to the fact that around 90 percent of the adults in any community are graduates of or at least former students of public schools?

What did we—teachers, counselors, authority figures all—do to our students to make a goodly number of them to feel disaffected with the "place" where they spent 12 or 13 years?

Do we need to have weekly prayer sessions each Monday morning at 6:30 with all the staff to inculcate the motto "Students Today—Voters Tomorrow"?

In the spirit of these questions, we feature David Schimmel's article about the ways most school staffs "teach" school rules and regulations. David indicates that we may well be overlooking opportunities to help young people learn and appreciate how democracy operates in a positive sense. Instead, we may be teaching them how to resent authority. That resentment can temper their behavior starting several years later when they are asked to vote and otherwise respond to requests for support of their public schools.

And how do educators treat students from single parent families, and "at-risk" students? Judith Cochran and Jim Ellsberry give specific pointers about these future voters/citizens too.

The moral must be the **how we treat people today** will dictate in large measure **how they will respond to us tomorrow.**

Our Reprint Policy

We grant school district or school subscriber the right to photocopy articles from this *Journal* for local school or district use. (This policy does not apply to intermediate units and to higher education subscribers—contact the publisher.) We do require that any items photocopied for distribution carry this credit line:

Reproduced with permission from the Journal of Educational Relations, Vol. __, No. __; the Journal is published quarterly at $48 at Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657.

Al Holliday

Al Holliday
Editor-Publisher

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 18, No. 3
3nd Quarter 1997

IFC **Editor's Column**

2 **The Subversion of Citizenship Education**—A call for a collaborative, educational model for the making of school rules. *By David Schimmel*

12 **The Learning Unlimited Program**—A process of building a caring school-community for "at-risk" students. *By Jim Ellsberry*

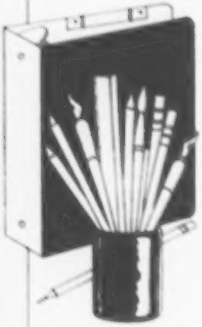
17 **Case Study—What's It All About...Alfie?** How and when should school officials take steps to deal with a student's inappropriate behavior? *By Jackie Goldberg*

Case Study Response—Gaining the Parents' Cooperation is Crucial to Alfie's Schooling. *By Cindy Jo Gordon and Philip T. West*

22 **A Relationship Challenge for Educators**—Children living with single parents. Plus, guidelines for working with single parent families. *By Judith Cochran*

28 **Communication Commentary**: A selection of news and information gathered by the editor.

IBC **Editorial Review Board; Photographer Credits**



Cover photo by
Michael Siluk,
New Brighton, MN

Subscription Service:
questions,
renewals,
new orders,
change of address,

Call toll-free:
800-537-2624.
Outside U.S.
(717) 766-0574

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations—ISSN 0741-3653
Editor-in-chief: Albert E. Holliday
Managing editor: Joan M. Holliday
Book reviews: Arthur W. Steller
Research/case studies: Philip T. West

The Journal of Educational Relations is published quarterly by the Educational Communication Center,
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657. Telephone 717-761-6620.

Copyright 1997.

Subscriptions: Individual rate, $48 per year. Single copy, $15. Library rate, $60 per year.
Single copy, $20. Add $4 for subscriptions outside of the United States.
Payment in U.S. funds.

Periodicals postage paid at Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Journal of Educational Relations,*
P.O. Box 657, Camp Hill PA 17001-0657.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Subversion of Citizenship Education

A call for a collaborative, educational model for the making of school rules.

By David Schimmel

A vital part of education for citizenship is an enlightened process for developing school rules and teaching students about them. School rules are, after all, a form of law that applies to students. There is no reason why the quality of instruction about school rules should lag behind the quality of education about the legal system in general, for which there now exist excellent materials and methods.[1]

In reality, however, instruction about school rules often violates the norms of good teaching. Rules are frequently communicated to students in a manner that would be unacceptable if applied to other subjects.

Imagine a social studies teacher who taught the Constitution by simply giving a copy to students, asking them and their parents to sign a form acknowledging that they had read the document, and then testing the students on their constitutional knowledge and understanding! This would obviously be considered poor teaching. Yet little attention is given to the way in which school rules are taught.

Sometimes they are not even taught at all. When they are taught, rules are often distributed in a handbook the first week of school, with requests for students and parents to sign and return a form acknowledging that they have read them. Students are then held responsible for obeying the rules or suffering the consequences. Another frequent approach is for principals or teachers to distribute the rules at the first assembly or homeroom and simply tell students how important it is for the rules to be read and obeyed.

The way a school's rules are developed and taught has three major defects: First, it violates what we know about good teaching; second, it provokes students to subvert or ignore school rules; and third, it undermines self-discipline and citizenship education.

This article, which is based on questionnaires and interviews with more than 100 elementary and secondary principals and teachers,[2] describes the predicament arising from most student codes of conduct. It suggests a collaborative, educational model for school rules that is more likely to result in students' willing compliance and positive attitudes, but does not relinquish the authority and responsibility of principals or teachers.

Destructive Rule-Making: The Authoritarian Approach

Most school codes of conduct share five problems.

1. They are negative, restrictive and unexplained. Usually rules are framed as "thou shalt nots," and contain little or nothing about student rights. There is often a single sentence about the purpose of the rules (e.g., "to provide an orderly and safe environment") followed by long lists of prohibitions and penalties. One small town high school code of conduct, for example, includes eight pages of "violations of school rules" (ranging from "physical violence" to "swearing") followed by a list of minimum to maximum "penalties/consequences" for each violation.

(Prohibitions/punishment rules result in) teachers and administrators being viewed as disciplinarians rather than educators.

While the penalties and procedures for enforcing the rules are often clear, many of the prohibitions are unexplained and seem arbitrary. The reasons for some rules are obvious (e.g., those prohibiting guns, drugs, assault, and theft), but there are many rules for which the reasons are not clear. Some examples from my survey include:

no cameras
no toys
no sunglasses
no white-out
no backpacks
no yo-yos
no magic markers
no muscle shirts
no candy
no mouth spray
no chewing gum
no baggy pants
no hats[3]

Some rules can be so vague that reasonable students and administrators interpret them very differently. Examples include: no "inappropriate clothing," no clothing that "detracts from the general instructional atmosphere," no "profane" language, no "trading of items," no "display of self-defacing behavior," no "fooling around" on buses, no "sexual innuendos," and no "possession or display of any item that could be used to harm another."[4] These vague prohibitions invite conflicting interpretations, and they risk being viewed with cynicism.

2. They are authoritarian. Restrictive rules handed down in a dictatorial manner that are not clearly related to safety or education are often viewed by students as arbitrary and illegitimate. Citizens who live under dictatorships tend to feel that it is moral to disregard or subvert laws that arbitrarily restrict their freedom and are imposed upon them without their participation. Students often feel the same way. Many disobey autocratic rules without guilt and encourage others to do so.

3. There is non-participation by students in the development of school rules. Although a few student representatives may be given an opportunity to comment on proposed codes of conduct, the vast majority of students are not invited to participate in the development or revision of school rules, and therefore have no sense of ownership. (This is equally true of most teachers and parents, who can also feel disenfranchised.) This lack of participation can lead to misinformation and misunderstanding about the rights and responsibilities of students and teachers. As a result, students and parents sometimes assert rights they don't have, and misinformed teachers may fail to take appropriate disciplinary action because of unfounded fears of being sued for violating student rights.

4. School rules are usually written and distributed in a formal and legalistic rather than educational manner. Many principals appear unconscious of their role as the leading "law teachers" of their schools, and seem unaware of the educational implications of the way they develop, interpret, and apply school rules. They tend to think of school rules as administrative or legal documents, not as educational materials. As a result, codes of conduct are sometimes written in "legalese" and there is usually no process for assessing whether students understand the rules.

The purpose of having students and par-

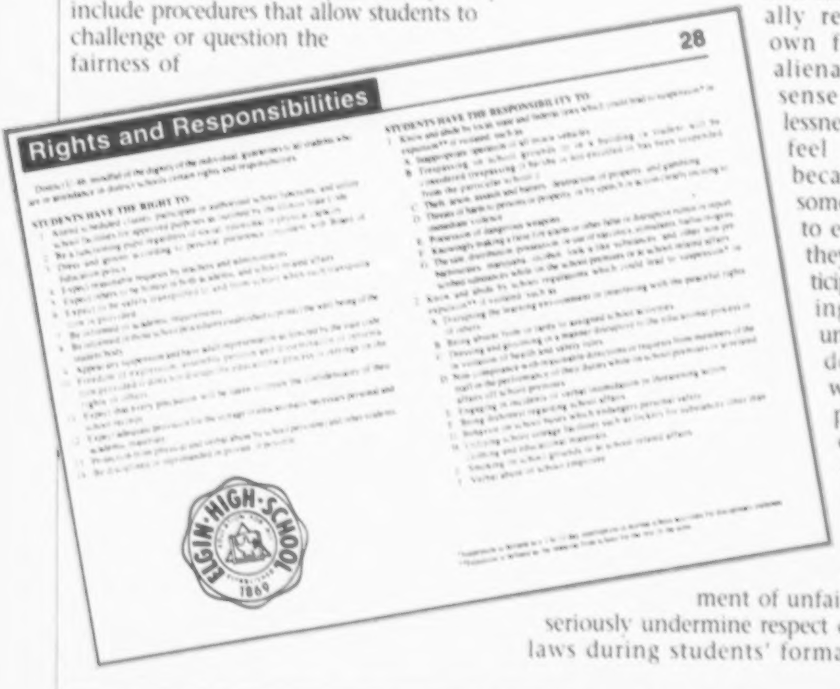
School handbooks include pages of prohibitions, punishments and responsibilities, and almost nothing about students' rights...and students' participation in decision-making.

ents pledge that they have received the rules is "to put them on notice" so "they can't plead ignorance" when students are punished for rule violations. Unlike the excellent law-related materials that have been developed to teach about our civil and criminal justice system, the rules and laws that govern students in our schools are rarely developed as educational documents, taught as part of the curriculum, or evaluated for their completeness, clarity, or effectiveness.

5. School rules lack standards or procedures. While student handbooks often include procedures for hearings before students are suspended or expelled, they rarely include procedures that allow students to challenge or question the fairness of specific rules or their implementation.[5] There are also usually no agreed-upon standards or procedures for judging whether rules are unnecessary, discriminatory, irrelevant, ambiguous, or inconsistent in the way in which they are written or enforced.

The issue of fairness comes up at every grade level. Whether in the second grade or the twelfth, when a student says about a rule (or its application), "It's not fair," there are two typical responses by teachers: "Life's not fair" or "But that's the rule." These responses tend to teach students a counterproductive lesson.

Interviews with teachers indicate that such responses usually reflect their own frustration, alienation, or sense of powerlessness. Teachers feel frustrated because they sometimes have to enforce rules they didn't participate in making, don't understand, or don't agree with, but feel powerless to change. The destructive lessons that are taught by the enforcement of unfair rules may seriously undermine respect of rules and laws during students' formative years.



28

Rights and Responsibilities

STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

STUDENTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

ELGIN HIGH SCHOOL
1869

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Negative Consequences

The five characteristics of most student codes of conduct outlined above lead to several negative consequences.

1. Distortion of the Role of Educators. As a result of rules that focus on prohibitions and punishments, teachers and administrators tend to be viewed and to behave more as disciplinarians that as educators, and therefore spend a disproportionate amount of time policing rather than teaching. When students are perceived as disrespectful, disobedient, or disorderly, schools often respond by making tougher rules and enforcing them with stiffer penalties. This often leads to a self-defeating cycle of escalating rules, penalties, and defiance.

2. Promotion of Antagonism. If students don't willingly submit to school rules, they must be enforced. The problem with coercion as a means of control, writes William Muir, is that "it depends on intimidation" and "partners to a coercive relationship...are almost invariable antagonistic to one another."[6] Even if coercion succeeds and students submit, there is often an educational defeat since many students become defiant, inattentive or insubordinate. Alienated students tend to be disrespectful of authority and negative about schooling.

3. The Undermining of Rule and Authority. Extensive research in social psychology and procedural justice shows that when people do not have an opportunity to present their views in advance about rules that will affect them, they are less likely to comply with rules and procedures. They tend to be dissatisfied with organizational decisions, more often engage in "clever" disobedience, and have poorer performance and less positive attitudes towards those in authority.[7]

4. The Undermining of Responsibility and Self-Discipline. Educators claim to prepare students to become active, responsible citizens. However, they undermine this goal when they issue codes of conduct with only token student participation; when school handbooks include pages of prohibitions, punishments, and responsibilities, and almost nothing about students' rights; when elementary teachers post classroom rules on the first day of school (because they "don't want to take time away from teaching"); and when high school students' participation in decision-making is restricted to carefully controlled student governments that deal with trivial issues.

Traditional codes of conduct that rely on control and punishment to teach responsibility are usually ineffective and counterproductive. Jane Nelsen and other writers on school discipline point out that a system that depends on external control doesn't teach self-control. It "makes the teacher responsible, not the students. It is the teacher's responsibility to catch the students...being bad and punish them."[8] Punishment, writes Nelsen, "will usually stop misbehavior for a while," but it is not effective when the teacher isn't around, and it has no positive long-range effect. Instead, it reinforces dependency, eliminates student initiative, and encourages passive or grudging compliance with rules.

In a system that encourages (student) participation and responds to their views, they are...more likely to become...effective citizens...

Despite these negative consequences, many parents and educators believe that the only answer to misbehavior and the way to "regain

Photo by Geri Kody, Clark County Schools, Las Vegas, NV

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

control" of the schools is to punish, suspend, and the expel the troublemakers so that those who want to learn can do so. In some situations, where schools have tried everything else but failed, extreme penalties are needed. But in most schools, collaborative approaches that could lead to voluntary compliance with codes of conduct have not failed—they simply have not been tried.[9]

> ***The way rules are taught violates what we know about good teaching, provokes students...to ignore (rules), and undermines self-discipline and citizenship.***

An Alternative Collaborative Rule-Making

Here are the characteristics of an alternative approach that is more likely to result in willing compliance with school rules and to protect safety and order.

1. There is participation. All citizens of the school community—students, parents, and staff—should be encouraged to participate in the development of school and classroom rules. Research in social psychology indicates that people tend to voluntarily follow rules developed using fair, participatory procedures. Procedures are considered fair when those affected have an opportunity to express their views about rules and decisions before they are made, and the decision-maker considers those views.

There are a variety of collaborative models for encouraging student participation. Most are found in elementary classrooms. In a Washington, D.C. school, for example, all students participate during their first week in a structured process of rule-making that uses small group discussion, emphasizes responsibility and cooperation, identifies positive as well as negative consequences of student behavior, and culminates in a formal ceremony in which the teacher and each student sign their "Classroom Constitution."[10]

To consider other examples, Ruth Charney's book titled *Teaching Children to Care* describes the ways a "difficult" fifth grade class collaboratively constructs a "class charter," and sixth graders develop a "contract of binding rules." [11] And, in a Massachusetts elementary school, a principal used"community meetings" that focus on the rights and responsibilities of members of the school community not only to establish rules at the beginning of the year, but also to develop the capacity to collaboratively solve school problems throughout the year. [12]

Large secondary schools use different approaches. In an New York high school, five students elected from each grade level draft a proposed school code of conduct with a Law and Government teacher, and then submit it to the school's Student Legislature. Legislators then discuss the draft in each homeroom before revising it and submitting it to the principal for his approval. An Illinois high school is planning to have students in Civics classes develop the code of conduct (after surveying all students and staff); design a schoolwide process with their teacher and principal to have their proposal discussed, modified, and approved; and then have seniors teach the code to incoming ninth graders.

Participation is not only important for students; it is equally important for two other critical constituencies—teachers and parents. Since both groups can play a central role in explaining and supporting (or criticizing and subverting) school rules, administrators should encourage them to participate in rule-making.

In one elementary school, for example, the principal and school council sent a questionnaire with the proposed handbook to all parents and teachers, explain its purposes, and request their comments on "readability, omissions, deletions, corrections, additions," and whether they feel the rules are "positive and educational." Whatever process is used to seek participation, it should go far beyond a general invitation by the principal at an end-of-the-year faculty meeting or in a parent newsletter to share suggestions about school rules.

2. Rules are balanced, reasoned, and positive. Rather than being filled with prohibitions and punishments, codes of conduct should contain a balance of rights and responsibilities and emphasize how they promote civic values. They should begin with an explanation of the participatory process used to develop the code, how it promotes the school's educational mission, and how it protects students' rights. In a Rochester, New York, high school, the code of conduct includes these student rights:

- to participate in classroom instruction and extra-curricular activities;
- to a safe environment;
- to participate in the development of school rules;
- to present petitions, complaints, or grievances to appropriate school authorities;
- to exercise the rights of free speech, assembly, press and association so long as such exercise does not interfere with the educational process or violate the rights of others.[13]

Codes can next have copy about student responsibilities, and why most individual rights are not absolute and must be limited to protect safety and order. When reasons for prohibitions are not obvious, they should be justified in relation to specific educational goals.[14] The Rochester code includes sections on student responsibilities, such as arriving at class on time, respecting the rights of others, applying their abilities to improve their education and the school community, and observing rules of conduct (which explain when and why student freedom must be restricted to achieve certain missions of the school). In addition, the code clearly prohibits the use of tobacco, illegal drugs, or alcohol; cheating; fighting; stealing; and dangerous weapons.

3. Rules are educational. Codes of student conduct should be conceived and written as **educational** materials. Research on classroom management has found that effective educators "teach behavioral rules...in much the same way as they teach instructional content."[15]

Teachers and administrators should agree on instructional objectives, and teachers should develop lesson plans that include varied methods (such as simulations and small group discussions) that involve participation by all students. This instruction should be integrated into the regular school curriculum and especially into Social Studies or Civics courses. Homework might involve discussion of important rules with parents. There also should be strategies to assess student knowledge and understanding of the rules, and plans for individualized instruction, re-teaching, and re-testing when appropriate.

4. Rules should be fair. When a student says a rule is unfair, he or she may mean "I don't like it" or "It punishes me for doing something I want to do." Fairness is sometimes seen as a subjective judgement about what a student or teacher likes or prefers. Are there less subjective criteria for assessing whether a rule is fair or unfair? If students, teachers, and administrators could agree on such criteria, this could change the nature of the discussion about whether a school rule is fair. I believe that such agreement can be achieved and that there are good teaching material available to help.

The Center for Civic Education, for

example, has developed interesting, interactive, age-appropriate curriculum units for students from kindergarten to high school to help them understand and analyze what makes a rule good or bad.[16] Among the suggested criteria for judging good rules are that they:

- do not discriminate
- are relevant to educational goals
- are easy to understand
- are not vague, ambiguous, arbitrary or subjective
- are enforceable
- are not in conflict with constitutional values

Other criteria for good rules might be that they are clear, don't contradict each other, are known to the people they affect, can be complied with, and have reasonable educational consequences when broken.

There also should be an established procedure for students to question, challenge, or propose a rule. If the school community could agree on a set of standards for assessing school rules, the students who claim that a rule is unfair could be asked to explain how it violates one of the agreed-upon criteria. If students make an argument that a classroom or school rule violates the criteria (e.g. that it is irrelevant, ambiguous, unclear, or conflicts with constitutional values), then the teacher or principal should respond to the students and clarify, modify, justify, or repeal the rule.

Barriers and How to Overcome Them

Some educators fear that allowing significant student participation may lead to a loss of control. However, writers on classroom discipline point out that teachers who involve students in collaborative rule-making will find that their fears about loss of control are unfounded, and that the rules students propose usually "are the same as, or stricter than, the rules teacher try to force on them."[17] Moreover, students "respect the rules that **they themselves make** much more than the same rules imposed by adults."[18]

Research shows that, if there is honest collaboration in rule-making, those affected are

Attendance (cont.)

27

likely to react favorably to the rules and decisions of authorities even if they disagree with them.[19]

Another frequent concern is that student participation is inefficient and time-consuming. Participation does take more time, but this is an investment with a triple dividend. Collaborative rule-making can lead to better rules, enhance self-discipline, and teach important citizenship skills.[20]

*1. **Improvement of Rules.*** Broad participation and comments by students, teachers, and parents in school rule-making is likely to alert administrators to proposed rules that are confusing, irrelevant, contradictory, inadequate, or unenforceable—before they are printed in the handbook. This will improve the quality and clarity of school rules and procedures and make them less likely to be challenged or subverted.

*2. **Increase in Self-Discipline.*** Psychologists have found that, if children obey rules not because they believe they are reasonable but simply to avoid punishment, they are less likely to internalize such rules and less likely to follow them without such a threat.[21] In contrast, research on effective schools has found that "student participation in developing and reviewing school discipline programs creates a sense of ownership," and this leads to a climate in which students "want to achieve self-discipline."[22] Furthermore, research on well-disciplined schools indicates that teacher-student collaboration in problem-solving and rule-making is "more effective in reducing behavior problems than punishment."[23] Thus, unlike punitive disciplinary systems, collaborative rule-making promotes mutual respect, cooperation, self-discipline, and personal responsibility.

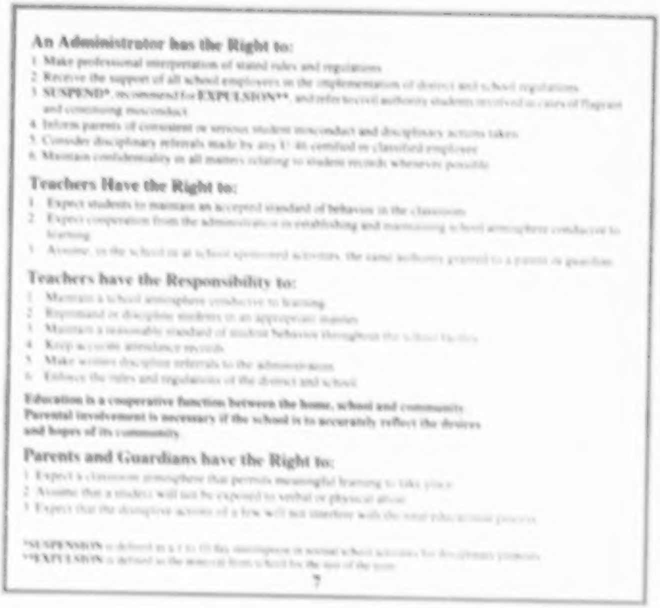
*3. **Education in Citizenship Skills.*** Most schools teach Civics without giving students an opportunity to acquire and practice citizenship skills. However, collaboration in making school and classroom rules gives students that opportunity. Such collaboration in making school and classroom rules gives students that opportunity. Such collaboration teaches students to consider the views of others, to work together to solve common problems, to take responsibility for their decisions, and to understand the importance of rules and laws. Furthermore, students who participate in their school governance process are more likely to be active citizens after they graduate.[24]

Collaborative rule-making develops the citizenship competencies called for in recent state and national standards. For example, the writers of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* urge schools not only to provide knowledge about government, but also to develop "those skill required for competent participation." According to the *National Standards*, "participatory skills are developed by providing students with opportunities to practice these skills," which students can attain by taking part in the "governance of their classrooms and school by working in groups to reach agreement about school rules."[25] Clearly, the *National Standards* support collaborative rule-making and suggest that it should become a part of every school's curriculum.

Students, of course, will not always agree with the final results of their collaboration with teachers and administrators. However, most students are less likely to feel betrayed by such disagreement if they understand why the principal has the legal responsibility and authority for making most school rules and approving classroom rules. Moreover, when students' views are rejected, they will learn why and—through the exchange—will learn that "the system" is responsive and that their concerns are considered. They also may learn about the complexities of democracy—that responsible authorities consider multiple perspectives

Photo by Mike Siluk, New Brighton, MN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



An Administrator has the Right to:

1. Make professional interpretation of stated rules and regulations
2. Receive the support of all school employees in the implementation of district and school regulations
3. **SUSPEND***, recommend for **EXPULSION****, and refer to civil authority students involved in cases of flagrant and continuing misconduct
4. Inform parents of consistent or serious student misconduct and disciplinary actions taken
5. Consider disciplinary referrals made by any U-46 certified or classified employee
6. Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to student records whenever possible

Teachers Have the Right to:

1. Expect students to maintain an accepted standard of behavior in the classroom
2. Expect cooperation from the administration in establishing and maintaining school atmosphere conducive to learning
3. Assume, in the school or at school sponsored activities, the same authority granted to a parent or guardian

Teachers have the Responsibility to:

1. Maintain a school atmosphere conducive to learning
2. Reprimand or discipline students in an appropriate manner
3. Maintain a reasonable standard of student behavior throughout the school facility
4. Keep accurate attendance records
5. Make written discipline referrals to the administration
6. Enforce the rules and regulations of the district and school

Education is a cooperative function between the home, school and community. Parental involvement is necessary if the school is to accurately reflect the desires and hopes of its community.

Parents and Guardians have the Right to:

1. Expect a classroom atmosphere that permits meaningful learning to take place
2. Assume that a student will not be exposed to verbal or physical abuse
3. Expect that the disruptive actions of a few will not interfere with the total educational process

***SUSPENSION** is defined as a 1 to 10 day interruption in normal school activities for disciplinary purposes.
****EXPULSION** is defined as the removal from school for the rest of the year.

7

and conflicting values, and that even a majority cannot override constitutional principles or the rights of the minority.

Conclusions

After students spend 12 years in a system that seems to reward non-questioning non-participation in the rule-making process, it is not surprising that many of them become cynical, passive, non-voting citizens.

Conversely, in a system that encourages their participation and responds to their views, students are more likely to become the effective citizens and responsible supporters of our constitutional democracy that our schools were intended to promote.

In the perennial debate about citizenship, education, school rules, and student discipline, we are often presented in alarmist terms with a choice between a firm, benevolent dictatorship needed to insure order, and an out-of-control permissiveness that leads to confusion and violence.

We should reject these equally inappropriate choices and find a better alternative, a middle ground between authoritarian administration and permissiveness that can teach effective and responsible citizenship skills.

Collaborative rule-making is, I submit, the better educational alternative.

References

1. See, for example, *Foundations of Democracy: Authority, Privacy, Responsibility and Justice* (Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1993); *Civil Justice and Criminal Justice*, Third Edition (New York: Scholastic/Constitutional Rights Foundation, 1988); Edward McMahon, Lee Arbetman, and Edward O'Brien, *Street Law*, fifth edition (St. Paul: West Publishing Company, 1997).

2. The questionnaires were completed at a Massachusetts Principals Institute on March 16, 1995, by 58 elementary, 21 middle/junior high, and 22 high school principals. All principals responded "yes" to the question "Does your school teach its students about school rules?" However, when asked to describe the "methods" used to teach the rules, less than 5 percent indicated that the rules were taught as educational materials or as part of the curriculum. Although almost 60 percent responded "yes" to the questions, "Do you assess whether students understand the rules?", the most frequent methods of assessment were "observations, frequency of violation," and "discussion at time of violation." These responses were corroborated in interviews with more than 30 teachers and administrators in Ohio, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York, between October 1995 and March 1996.

3. These and the following examples are taken from an examination of 28 student handbooks/codes of conduct (from 6 elementary, 8 middle/junior high,

11 senior high, and 3 district-wide codes) from Florida, Ohio, Massachusetts, and New York.

4. Similarly, an Alabama Code of Student Conduct listed as a punishable offense: "Possession of any item which may be conceivable used as a weapon on school grounds." A state court held that the rule was unconstitutionally vague and ambiguous. Dothan City Board of Education v. V.M.H., 660 So2d 1328 (Ala. Civ. App. 1995).

5. The American notion that government officials must act fairly in making important decisions affecting citizens is reflected in the constitutional requirement of due process of law. That is why the Supreme Court requires due process before students are suspended or expelled from public schools. But I believe fair procedures not only should apply before punishment; fairness also should characterize the way government officials—especially school administrators—develop, interpret and apply school rules.

6. William K. Muir, "Teacher's Regulation of the Classroom," in David Kirp and Donald Jensen, *School Days, Rule Days* (Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1986), 110-114.

7. Allan Lind and Tom Tyler, *The Social Psychology of Procedural Justice* (New York: Plenum Press, 1988), 79, 179, 187.

8. Jane Nelsen, Lynn Lott, and H. Stephen Glenn, *Positive Discipline in the Classroom* (Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing, 1993), 99. A central feature of *Positive Discipline* is regular class meetings throughout the year to teach cooperative problem solving.

9. A project sponsored by the federal Departments of Justice and Education indicated that the way to make schools safe is not by focusing on removing dangerous students but "by establishing a schooling process that increases students' voluntary compliance with behavioral norms." Charles R. Tremper, "School Crime and Student Rights: 'Surprises' from a Federal Initiative," in *The Urban Review* 19,4 (1987): 235.

10. Ellen Bein and Susan Stern, "Democracy as Discipline," ERIC ED 375 119, March 2, 1994.

11. Ruth Sidney Charney, *Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom* (Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children, 1991), 58-63.

12. Ethel Sadowsky, "Democracy in Elementary School" in Ralph Mosher, Robert Kenny, Jr., and Andrew Garrod, *Preparing for Citizenship* (Westport: Prager, 1994), Chapter 7.

13. John Marshall High School, 1995-96 Student Code of Conduct (Draft), Rochester, New York.

14. In one junior high "Code of Cooperation," a clear reason is given for each rule followed by the "corrective action" that will be taken in case of violation. In addition, the handbook requires students to be included "when making decisions and rules which will affect them." 1995-96 Handbook, Dover-Sherborn Regional Junior High School, Dover, MA 4, 24-25.

15. Kathleen Cotton, "Schoolwide and Classroom Discipline," in *School Improvement Research Series V* (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, May, 1991), ERIC ED 347 614, 6.

16. *Authority: Lessons on Evaluating Rules, Levels I-IV* (1979-1995), Law in a Free Society Series, Center for Civic Education, Calabasas, CA.

17. Nelsen, Lott, and Glenn, 25.

18. C. Kamii and L. Joseph, *Young Children Continue to Reinvent Arithmetic, 2nd Grade* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1989, p. 52).

19. Lind and Tyler, 11, 28, 207.

20. Researchers have found that the time invested in participatory procedures is among "the least costly methods for improving organizational attitudes, cohesion and compliance." Ibid., 201.

21. Ervin Staub, *Positive Social Behavior and Morality, Vol. II Socialization and Development*, (New York: Academic Press, 1979), 92-99 22. Cotton, 3.

23. Ibid. In addition, "children who have had time to reflect on and debate about rules are more likely to remember the rules and understand their importance, thus preventing problems form occurring." Kathryn Castle and Karen Rogers, "Rule Creating in a Constructivist Classroom Community," *Childhood Education*, Vol. 70, No. 2, Winter 1993/94, 78.

24. *Preparing for Citizenship* provides a detailed rationale for teaching citizenship skills and extensive descriptions of controversial experiments in democratic governance (in public schools in Brookline, MA, and Hanover, NH) influenced by John Dewey and Lawrence Kohlberg. Mosher, Kenny, and Garrod, op. cit.

25. National Standards for Civics and Government (Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1994), 5-6, 19.

David Schimmel is professor of education in the Department of Educational Policy, Research and Administration at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. © National Council for the Social Studies. Reprinted by permission from the February 1997 edition of *Social Education*. NCSS is located at 3501 Newark Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016-2167.

Illustrations are courtesy of Elgin District U-46 Schools, Illinois High Schol Orientation Materials, examples of statements of rights as well as responsibilities of students, teachers, parents, etc.

The Learning Unlimited Program

A process of building a caring school-community for students "at-risk"

by Jim Elsberry

Let's be clear from the start, I'm not going to offer a bouquet of excuses for our troubled youth, putting the "blame" squarely on the system, or on their parents, or on teachers, or on the students themselves. Blame and shame do not help anyone. All of us, youths and adults alike, must be personally accountable for our choices. Instead of blaming, I want to share with you my experience with a program that has the power to have a positive impact on students' lives.

Learning Unlimited is a school-within-a-school voluntary alternative program in a large suburban high school. The author describes specific components of the program and how they meet student needs for connection, competence, self-control, and contribution.

Building a Community Circle of Caring

Twenty years ago, in a major metropolitan area, a suburban high school of nearly 4,000 students, with a minority population of nearly one-third, confronted two major problems.

First, the school population was changing as a result of court-ordered desegregation. Many students felt that, because of the size of the school, they were neither known nor valued by the system.

Second, although the school enjoyed a reputation of being "college preparatory," there were still too many non-college bound students who were mired in perpetual failure. Discipline referrals, fights, and gang activity escalated.

A "think tank" of parents, students, teachers, patrons, and administrators was convened to generate ideas for dealing with these two issues. What evolved from this collaborative effort was the implementation of a novel school-within-a-school concept. The program, *Learning Unlimited,* was clearly a quarter-century ahead of the times. The components of the program were perfectly aligned with the many "basic needs" models that have since become quite popular. By building our program around the concepts of **connection**, **competence**, **self-control**, and **contribution**, *Learning Unlimited* was able to create a true Community Circle of Caring.

In the **Table**, under each of the four concepts, are listed corresponding program components from *Learning Unlimited.*

Once these components were conceived, it became a matter of staffing the program and identifying which students would best be served by it. At the end of its third year, the program was effectively serving more than 300 students with a half-time administrator, a full-time secretary, a coordinator of community-based learning, the equivalent of 12 full-time teachers, two college interns, and a cadre of parent volunteers. The power

TABLE
Learning Unlimited: Building a Community Circle of Caring

Connection
1. Admission by Application
2. Orientation
3. Family Groups
4. Team-Building Retreats

Competence
1. Academic Proficiencies
2. World as a Classroom
3. Goal Action Plans
4. Small Classes and Cooperative Learning

Self-Control
1. Class A Passport
2. Discipline Board
3. Life-Role Skills
4. Leadership Development

Contribution
1. Service Learning
2. Student Government
3. Enigmatic Egos
4. Leaving a Legacy

of the program to change lives was, and still is, found in the detail of its major components.

Connection

It has been said that we, as humans, want to be identified with something larger, more important, than ourselves. Whether a gang or a church, a culture that has the power to attract and hold its members begins with the process of making them feel welcome, special, and included.

Admission by Application: To gain admissions to *Learning Unlimited*, one had to have a compelling reason. This rule was not made in the name of elitism; it was an intentional effort to communicate that the program was not for everyone. It was an alternative for those students who were at risk in the traditional program. They might be "at risk" by definition of the system, which meant repeated failure, discipline problems, or both. Or they might be "at risk" by definition of the student and/or parents, which usually meant a bright, talented individual who was not sufficiently challenged by the rote methods of traditional schooling.

Application forms, including a recommendation from a counselor, teacher, or administrator, were completed by students. Teachers and students from *Learning Unlimited* then sorted the applications, interviewed prospective candidates, and selected those who would fill spots left open through graduation or transfers back to the traditional program.

Orientation: Becoming part of a new culture requires adapting to its rites, rituals, and traditions. Once admitted to *Learning Unlimited*, the students and their parents or guardians were given a half-day orientation to the program. This initial orientation was designed and conducted by the Community Coordinator, student leaders, and parent volunteers. Ongoing orientation was managed by student leaders and volunteers. (See Enigmatic Egos under **Contribution**.)

Family Groups: Making a large school seem smaller is a challenge, but it can be done. One way we found was to emphasize the importance of relationships. Each adult staff member of *Learning Unlimited* was responsible for forming a group of eight to 12 students who would stick together during the year to provide a sense of "intimacy" for its members. Often their activities would include going to lunch or breakfast together, visiting a group member's house, or going to the movies and then for pizza. It was common for one group to challenge another to a game of volleyball, softball, or touch football.

Some kids did not need this kind of support, so although membership was required, attendance was not. For other kids, it was their backbone of support. Loners and other kids who had difficulty "fitting in" were easily integrated and made to feel welcome, important, and valued.

Team-Building Retreats: Bringing students and staff members together for a weekend of planning in a peaceful, wooded setting promoted a common bond difficult to achieve at school. Music, games, and contests provided the fun; individual goal setting and seminar topics provided the knowledge base. It was not uncommon for one or two kids to "mess up" and create a problem during a retreat. When this happened, we used it as an opportunity for teaching about responsibility as individuals and as a community.

Competence

It has been said that information is power. Unfortunately, it is not that simple; we also have to understand the information, its relevance, and its authenticity. Otherwise, we may find ourselves making decisions based on data that is incorrect or that we do not understand to begin with. The study of information, however, that results in awareness, understanding, and judicious applications can be said to be competence. We saw competence as power.

Academic Proficiencies: We began the academic component by aligning course content with desired results. Many of our students were bound for college; those who were not would be bound for the military or the world of work. It was essential to teach them what they needed to know to prepare them for success at whatever their next level might be. We also wanted to prove to ourselves that we could compete with the best and brightest in the traditional school. We asked department chairs to provide copies of the semester exams so we could test our kids against their standards.

World as a Classroom: All learning does not occur within the four walls of a classroom. No teacher, regardless of how talented, can be the fountainhead of all knowledge. No school can afford the vast array of resources available within a community. We made good and frequent use of these community resources to supplement the educational program provided within the school.

Learning Unlimited literally had students all over the world—Israel, Alaska, Europe, Russia, and Canada. They did internships in hospitals, raised crops and tended livestock, worked with city planners, hauled garbage, took adventure trips, did a cultural exchange with Native Americans, studied the impact of pollution on sea life off the south Florida coast, and campaigned in the New Hampshire primary. We were limited only by imagination.

Goal Action Plans: To teach the skills of life-long learning, we taught students a simple format for developing their own curricula, setting their own goals, managing their learning resources, and assessing their own progress. We stressed the importance of being actively engaged in their own learning and accountable for giving meaning to their educational experience.

Small Classes and Cooperative Learning: The measure of learning should be what can you do, not how long you occupy a chair. Classes did not meet every day. When class was not in session, students used the time to pursue individual contracts related to mastery of academic skills or community-based projects. As a result, program teachers could manage numbers in more flexible ways than the traditional school teacher.

Participating in a judicial inquiry was the epitome of cooperative learning. Students would identify a controversial issue, choose pro and con teams, then put the issue on trial. A judge, jury, and audience determined which team had done the most effective job of researching, presenting evidence, neutralizing opposing arguments, and asking penetrating, relevant questions. Issues that went on trial included right to life, bio-ethics, and court-ordered desegregation.

Self Control

Teaching the awesome responsibility of freedom requires risk. At some point, you simply have to trust in your students. Our investment of trust paid huge dividends.

Class A Passport: To monitor the hourly coming and going of students using the community as a classroom, each student was given a laminated ID card that served as a passport in and out of the building. Naturally, some students abused the privilege. The consequences? They surrendered their cards and were restricted to the building. Most kids, however, treated this privilege as a "sacred" trust.

Discipline Board: In part, responsible citizenship means conforming to and abiding by peer-group norms. In keeping with this concept, we empowered students to play a vital role in dealing with violations of discipline codes. The discipline board was comprised of one teacher, the administrator, and two students. Alleged offenders could add a member to represent them in the proceedings. The board heard the evidence presented by the parties involved and made their recommendation to the administrator. The administrator retained veto power, but the wisdom of the board was so sound, the veto power was never invoked.

Life-Role Skills: Gaining independence is related to one's personal self-control and is developed through experiences related to real-life situations. We identified 14 skills for living that cut across all content lines and provided an interdisciplinary focus for learning. Included among these 14 were conflict resolution, time management, problem solving, listening, interviewing, and nonverbal communication.

Leadership Development: Leaders are made, not born. Effective leadership requires skills and opportunity. In *Learning Unlimited*, we saw all aspects of life as opportunities to lead. *The Memory Book* (our annual), the VFA (the Voice From Above, our daily PA announcements), the *VFB* (the *Voice From Below*, our weekly newspaper), *The Footbook* (our student handbook), Town Meetings (weekly public forums for airing concerns and celebrating successes), and the Community Liaison (posting of learning opportunities within the local community) were all activities that were ultimately turned over to student leaders. We taught them the concept of servant leadership, and held them accountable to that standard. In exchange, they taught us that leadership comes in all sizes, shapes, and colors, often from the most unlikely of sources.

Contributions

It is important to provide opportunities for people to give back to the system. If the culture is healthy, and builds capacity rather than dependency, people will want to help others succeed. We felt the spirit of altruism was worth nurturing, especially for those who had never experienced the act of being generous.

Advice on Starting a Similar Program

On reflection, Jim Ellsberry has this advice for people who wish to consider beginning a program along the same lines:

1. Go slow. You may need to take several years to build a total program.

2. Start small. Pick components that afford the best payoff soonest, and then build on that success.

3. Have conviction that your beliefs are valid, and express those beliefs through your actions.

Service Learning: It may seem an oxymoron to say you require service learning, but we did. As part of their personal challenge contracts and mastering life-role skills, all students engaged in service activities. These projects included working with children at Riley Hospital, Indianapolis, assisting the elderly in local nursing homes, recreational activities with the mentally and/or physically challenged young adults at the New Hope Foundation, and providing tutoring for elementary students. Our students ranked their service learning projects among the most powerful of the program's components.

Student Government: The formal power base of elected student leaders was given respect. Each year, a senior and a junior were elected to serve as equals alongside faculty/staff in all matters related to the administration of the program. Their responsibilities also included working with the other student leaders of program activities cited earlier.

Enigmatic Egos: One simple way to "give something back" is to be an anonymous friend to those who have yet to master the system. As an integral part of ongoing orientation, the older kids could volunteer to "shadow" less experiences students. Their job was to unobtrusively stay in touch with their partners and help ensure that they were getting the information they needed, keeping up with their studies, observing due dates, and getting the most from the program. They saw to it that no one was lost in the shuffle.

Leaving a Legacy: A question we should all ask ourselves is, "How would we like to be remembered?" Many of our students felt that participating in *Learning Unlimited* was an honor, and some wanted to play a part in giving that gift to others who could benefit from it. These were the students we wanted to help recruit new students because they had the passion.

Each spring, we developed a cadre of students who visited the three area middle schools and talked with counselors, teachers, and parents. They helped identify those students they felt had the most compelling reasons for attending *Learning Unlimited* and encouraged them to apply to the program. What pride they felt when on of "their kids" made it! They had passed on the gift. The Community Circle of Caring was now complete.

References

Blankstein, A.M. & DuFour, R. (in press). *Reaching today's students: Building the community circle of caring.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Coopersmith, S. (1967). *The antecedents of self-esteem.* San Francisco: W.H. Freeman.

Glasser, W. (1986). *Control theory in the classroom.* New York: Perennial Library.

Mendler, A. (1992). *What do I do when...? How to achieve discipline with dignity in the classroom.* Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Sagor, R. (1993). *At-risk students: Reaching and teaching them.* Swampscott, MA: Watersun Publishing Co.

Learning Unlimited is a school-within-a-school program at North Central High School, Indianapolis, Indiana 46240. The program has continued into 1997-98, though not at the same level because of recent personnel changes and budget reductions.

Jim Ellsberry is former principal of Learning Unlimited and has been a teacher, counselor and coach in his 30-year-plus career. Most recently he was executive director of the state Principal Leadership Academy. He is now director of his consulting firm at 8808 Slevins Dr., Nineveh, In 46164. (317) 933-3365.

This article first appeared in *Reaching Today's Youth: The Community Circle of Caring Journal*, **Volume 1, Issue 2, copyright 1997, by the National Education Service, all rights reserved. For information, contact the NES at 800-733-6786; FAX 812-336-7790; e-mail: nes@nes.org; Web: www.nes.org.**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What's It All About...Alfie?

How and when should school officials take steps to deal with a student's inappropriate behavior?

by Jackie Goldberg

A quiet community 40 minutes from the nearest large city, Shady Grove has two elementary schools, the older Shady Grove Elementary and the newer Crawford Elementary, named for the first superintendent of schools.

Shady Grove elementary has experienced changes in its population in the last 10 years. Where once it served an average middle class community, it now must meet the needs of lower income families attracted to the older, low-cost homes in the area.

Less education oriented, many families have children who enter school never having had a book read to them and with little knowledge of colors, numbers, or letters. They also demonstrate inadequate social skills. As a result, test scores for the school dropped during the recent demographic shift, and many students are considered to be potential dropouts.

One such student was 3rd grader Alfred Ames, whose reading ability was two years below the grade level. An extremely quiet child who avoided eye contact as much as possible, he showed no affection for or closeness to any staff member at Shady Grove. He did receive special reading help from Lois Shorter, a reading specialist, but his progress was slow.

Alfred appeared to have no friends. He stood apart during recess to watch the others play, making no attempt to join in. In class, he had a rough time with cooperative learning groups, usually ignoring participation in his assigned group. His teacher placed him in a number of different groupings, but he would hold back and merely observe or daydream. He never raised his hand in class and seemed almost frightened to be called on and recognized as a slow reader. His grades, with the exception of math, were deficient.

While usually a passive child, Alfred had displayed periodic episodes of obstinate behavior by refusing to follow directions or even do his work. He persistently did not return his weekly folder from home, have notes signed, or produce any homework. Sally Grimes, Alfred's 3rd grade teacher, was greatly concerned about him and made numerous unsuccessful attempts to engage him in learning and class activities. Since he was enrolled at Shady Grove, no one had been able to reach him.

Alfred's behavior had not yet presented a major problem at Shady Grove, although the faculty knew that he was making little or no progress academically or socially, and that he may have emotional problems as well. The staff had suggested twice that Alfred be tested for special education placement, but his mother had adamantly refused.

Charlotte Ames seldom visited the school. When a teacher or the principal, Larry Peal, had to contact her, Alfred's mother had appeared short-tempered and unpleasant. After the two staff calls to obtain her permission to test Alfred for learning disabilities, she had immediately called the principal, stating that "no one is going to stick a label on my child."

When some minor behavior disruptions had prompted one of Alfred's other teachers to call his mother, her reaction was curt and she refused to believe that Alfred was at fault. She called back the next day even more angry to tell Principal Peal that Alfred definitely was not involved in any wrongdoing because he had said so, and he never lied. Charlotte Ames even declared that the teacher was "obviously a liar and has it in for Alfred."

Even though no major problems were occurring at the school, Alfred's behavior on the bus was a different story. He repeatedly pushed, shoved, tripped, and kicked other students as they walked on or off the bus. He often refused to sit down, and as the driver, Mary Salida, operated the bus, she would see him standing as she looked in her rearview mirror. Alfred would pointedly ignore her repeated instructions to sit, looking at her angrily. Students complained about Alfred's behavior and their parents even called the principal at school. Mary realized that she had to talk to Alfred's mother about his behavior.

Every morning, Mary saw Alfred waiting at the bus stop with his mother. As the bus pulled up, Charlotte Ames would hug her son in a prolonged ritual that appeared to be embarrassing to Alfred. But he would stand there, passively enduring his mother's attention. Mary thought the mother's behavior was extreme. After he was released, Alfred would board the bus and begin his antics.

While usually a passive child, Alfred Ames had displayed periodic episodes of obstinate behavior.

Mary knew that Charlotte Ames would be at the bus stop the next morning, so she arrived early so she would have the time to express her concerns about Alfred's misbehavior. She pulled up in front of the house, opened the bus door, greeted Alfred and his mother, and began her rehearsed remarks. The mother became angry immediately. She had been standing on the street, but as her anger grew, she boarded the bus, launching a five-minute screaming attack on the driver. Alfred, she raged, could not be at fault. Other children were picking on him and trying to make trouble for him. Furthermore, she went on, it was clear that Mary Salida had no control of the children in her bus and that she should be taken off the job.

Mary, a young and pleasant natured person, had no idea of how to handle this woman. No parent had ever reacted like this when she had asked for help with discipline. Quite shaken, she finished her route, then went to see her supervisor, Bill White, who suggested that she make a written report on this and future incidents. He also told her to formalize her communication to the parent through the school district's referral process.

It wasn't long before she saw Alfred shoving a student as he walked passed him on the bus. She observed the incidents and wrote a bus referral. Shady Grove's policy on bus referrals required the principal to give the student the referral and confer with the student, emphasizing the need for safe bus riding practices. Three referrals meant suspension from the bus for a week, four, for the rest of the year. This policy was stated in the student handbook and a copy of the policy was sent home with the bus referrals.

Principal Peal received Alfred's bus referral from Mary Salida. He called Alfred to his office, gave his usual safety speech and asked him how he could improve his behavior on the bus. Alfred never

When contacted for permission to test her son for learning disabilities, Charlotte Ames had belligerently replied, "No one is going to stick a label on my child!"

looked at him or responded. When the principal asked the boy to look at him when he spoke, Alfred grew furious and screamed that his mother was going to have the bus driver fired.

The next morning, when the bus stopped in front of the Ames' home, Alfred's mother once again boarded the bus to scream at the driver that she was not going to sign "this pack of lies" on the referral about her Alfie. She also threatened to all the superintendent, ripping up the bus referral and throwing it at Mary.

As soon as the bus began moving in traffic Alfred turned around and punched a younger student in the stomach. The howling of the hurt student forced Mary to stop the bus by the side of the road. When she asked what happened, the little boy and all the students around him described the attack. Alfred denied everything.

Once again, the bus driver went to her supervisor. Again, she was told to make a written report. When the principal received the second referral on Alfred in two days, he became concerned. Once more he called Alfred to his office and, as before, faced a non -responsive student. When asked what

Photo by Shirley Haley, Mt. Vernon, WA

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

> ***The transportation supervisor called Principal Peal and asked him to arrange a meeting with Alfred's mother, the driver of the school bus on Alfred's route, and himself to resolve the student's misbehavior.***

had occurred, Alfred, after a long delay, answered "nothing." He claimed not to have touched anyone on the bus and said that Mary Salida did not like him and was trying to get him off her bus.

Principal Peal decided to call Charlotte Ames, unaware of the angry reaction the bus driver had previously received from the mother. When he broached the matter, Charlotte Ames abruptly interrupted. In a loud, nasty tone, she declared that she would be calling the superintendent about the lack of discipline and training of the bus drivers, and then slammed down the phone.

Noting that trouble was brewing, Principal Peal followed policy procedure by giving Alfred his bus referral. That same afternoon, on the ride home from school, Mary Salida told Alfred to sit in the front seat where she could keep a closer eye on him. He immediately ran to the back of the bus, kicking at the back exit door. Several students tried to quiet him, but he flailed at them, too. As Mary tried to cajole him to the front of the bus, he sat on the floor, facing the exit door, not responding. Deciding that at least he was now passive, she let him sit back there while she drove him home. Arriving at his house, Alfred left the bus as if nothing had happened. Mary followed him to his door and rang the doorbell. Charlotte Ames opened the door, and hearing the bus driver's explanation of events, began screaming obscenities, grabbing Alfred, and slamming the door in Mary's face. The few children left on the bus heard and saw the entire episode.

Early the next morning, Mary's transportation supervisor called the principal of Shady Grove Elementary and asked him to arrange a meeting with Alfred's mother, Mary, and himself. He told Principal Peal that he had an extremely upset bus driver on his hands and needed some resolution to this problem. He briefly explained the incident of the afternoon before and stated that Alfred would have to be suspended from the bus for a week.

Using his friendliest demeanor, the principal called the mother. He appealed to her for help in settling the situation, saying that no one knew her son better than she did. Charlotte Ames agreed to the meeting that was hastily arranged for 10 a.m. When all were present and seated, Larry Peal began to describe the incidents reported by Mary Salida and said that these actions would result in Alfred's suspension from the bus. On hearing this, the parent began a tirade against everyone in the room, ending with the statement that Alfred couldn't read, the school and the district were a "bunch of incompetent fools," she added, and she was marching right down to see the superintendent immediately. She rushed from the room, shoving the school secretary out of the way as she left.

At this point, Principal Peal thought it best to call the superintendent, explain what had happened, and warn her that an angry parent was on the way. Not long after hanging up the phone, Superintendent Sarah Sargent heard a commotion in her outer office. Charlotte Ames was there, bellowing about hiring a lawyer.

Unruffled, the superintendent escorted her into the office, offering reassurance that all could be solved. She listened quietly to the parent as she voiced a jumble of complaints. When Charlotte had talked herself out, Superintendent Sargent began to reiterate what she had heard so there would be some understanding of what the major complaints were—the bus situation and that Alfred couldn't read. She promised the mother that she would be discussing the problems with Principal Peal, but that Alfred would have to be taken off of the bus for the week.

The next day, Alfred arrived at Shady Grove on a different bus. He had, evidently, boarded another bus and the bus driver had unwittingly allowed it. He went to class, turned his face to the wall, and refused all communications. Various staff members tried to deal with him, but he remained where he was. The principal knew that he had to call the boy's mother, and he also remembered her call late yesterday from Sarah Sargent. The superintendent's message was clear: "Handle this problem!"

Larry Peal took a few moments to compose himself before lifting the phone, dreading the situation he must face.

Jackie Goldberg is assistant principal at Oak Ridge Elementary School in Conroe Independent School District, Conroe, TX.

Response to This Issue's Case Study

Gaining the Parent's Cooperation Is Crucial to Alfie's Schooling

by Cindy Jo Gordon and Philip T. West

Principal Peal's first action should be to call Charlotte Ames, Alfred's mother, and tell her that he plans to assign a mentor to ride the bus with her son when Alfred's bus suspension period is finished. Alfred is not a troublemaker in the classroom, only on the bus where he is not directly be supervised.

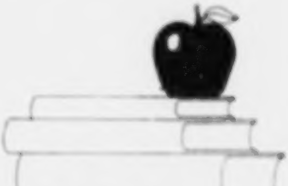
The second step for the principal is to obtain the mother's permission to test Alfred and determine why he is reading below his grade level. The principal should seek someone on the campus that Charlotte Ames may feel a rapport with, and have that person explain the testing process to her. The principal could also consider offering the parent a tutor for her son in the classroom to help him with his reading.

Principal Peal should arrange a meeting with Charlotte Ames and Alfred's teacher with the boy present to discuss why he does not participate in the classroom. The school counselor could also be involved in a visit with Alfred to further understand the boy's problems.

These steps should lead to resolving the bus situation, and to gaining the mother's support of the school staff's efforts to pinpoint why Alfred's reading level is two years below his grade level.

Cindy Jo Gordon is a first grade teacher in the Crockett Elementary School in the Bryan Independent School District, Bryan, TX.

Philip T. West is editor of the Case Study and Response departments in the Journal and professor emeritus of educational administration at Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.



A Relationship Challenge for Educators—
Children Living with Single Parents

by Judith Cochran

The single parent, not the two parent unit, is fast becoming a primary family care giver for school-age children. Recent statistics show that 60 percent of all children in school will live for six years or more in a single parent family.[1]

Educators must consider this sociological change and be aware that most children raised for an extended time in a home with a single parent show a decline in academic achievement.[2] Little research exists on the children raised in single parent homes as an at-risk population.

Unfortunately, many people have a mental image of a single parent as an unwed teenager living in an urban area. Single parents are just as likely to be small town or suburban divorced, widowed or separated women and men, and can also include people who have adopted children. Mia Farrow with her 14 birth and adopted children and the adopted children of Linda Ronstadt and Rosie O'Donald profile the different forms of well-know single parent families. However, none of the children of these entertainers are alone after school, without money or ridiculed because they are without two parents. In contrast, most children raised by single parents are frequently alone, as are their parents in a different sense in making decisions about child rearing and educational obstacles that influence children's school achievement. For these reasons, educators must review their policies and procedures regarding single parent families.

OBSTACLE #1: School Attendance, Parent Conferences, and After School Activities

Children with frequent absences find it difficult to do well in school. Children living with a single parent are often alone in the morning as their parent has gone to work. If they miss the school bus, misread the clock or need direct instructions, they may not make it to school on time or at all. For example, Mike, who is a single parent in an Ohio community, gets up at 5:30 a.m. to make sure that his 13-year-old son, Eric, is on time for his 7:30 a.m. 7th grade class. Eric then walks out the door and often does not arrive at school. Mike, who will be at work until five, calls home when Eric is supposed to back from school but can do little else to check on Eric. The attendance officer at the school, noting Eric's absence, calls Mike's home and gets the answering machine and then calls him at work to inform Mike that Eric is not in class. Two phone calls, one from the single parent and one from the school, have not ensured Eric's school attendance.

Unlike Mike, many single parents leave for work before their children must leave for school. While an early departure may also take place in two parent homes, one parent can usually arrange to be with children getting them dressed or taking them to the school door. Getting to school and then having positive experiences take place are interrelated component of school attendance. Children's arrival at school is the parent's responsibility. Ohio is not alone as a state that fines parents of children with excessive absences. On the second charge, Ohio judges will put one parent in jail. It is obviously not going to help Mike get Eric to school if he pays a fine and then risks his job by going to jail for Eric's truancies.

The attendance model that schools use is one in which all children have two parents. Children are frequently not invited to parent teacher conferences and some school activities. It is assumed that the single parent has someone who will care for other children while she or he attends parent teacher conferences. Single parents have difficulty finding time to talk about attendance problems with teachers and administrators. They cannot usually attend daytime school parties or plays. They do not have the time to be room mothers or bake cookies for school functions. Single parents themselves are often absent from school activities because they have no other adult to help them. Many work full time, assume total responsibilities for parenting sick and well children, maintain a home and try to attend school functions. They are alone and often not involved when school policies and attendance models are developed.

Possible Solution to Obstacle #1

One suggestion is for single parents to find extended family or friends or persons who will serve as helpers to become involved with attendance. Uncles, cousins, or others can help solve transportation and attendance problems. In one instance where the parent was ill, the truant officer found an uncle who was willing to provide temporary transportationfor his nieces. These girls had been out of school so much that they felt they could never make up the work. The truant officer in this case took the responsibility of identifying needy children and constructing solutions to attendance problems.

Other options are to solicit retired adults as volunteers to transport children to school and to work with those who don't have consistent care givers. Efforts must be made to increase the involvement of other adults in the attendance difficulties of children living with single parents.

OBSTACLE #2: Homework

Homework completion influences school achievement. Homework is the extension of the work done in class that affects

Table 1

1991 Income of Single-Mother Families

Income Source	Divorced/ Separated	Never Married	Widowed	Compared to Married Couples
Before Taxes	$18,.580	$9,820	$22,790	$42,130
After Taxes	$17,430	$9,710	$21,180	$39,160

Table 2

Family Households† Maintained by Single-Parent[6]

Years	Maintained by Mother	Maintained by Father
1995	7,615	1,440
1990	6,599	1,153
1985	6,006	896
1980	5,445	616

†Numbers in thousands

student grades, subject understanding and feelings of success. When the single parent is not home in the afternoon, there is no one to help children after school or to motivate them to do their homework. Without homework support, children can quickly fall behind in comprehension of content. To quote one sixth grader, "I think I understand the homework at school. But when I get home, I cannot remember how to do it so I just forget it."

Home study resources such as books, calculators, and computers are expensive household items for the single parent. Limited educational resources and no support-at home lead to homework not completed, lower grades, and reduced motivation—all risk factors for other serious problems in the teenage years.

Possible Solution to Obstacle #2

Durth and Zakrya discuss several programs that could be started to help with homework completion, such as a parent's resources center with specific times, facilities set up to help students with homework, and extended day programs.[3] Homework centers in community buildings, libraries, homes, or schools can give students resources and help with assignments that are difficult for children to complete or remember. These programs and extended day school schedules would be beneficial to all students, but especially to children being raised in single parent homes.

OBSTACLE #3: Financial Limitations

Single parents often have fewer resources to help their children academically and socially. Research shows that following a divorce, the single male parent's income remains the same, while female single parents find their income drops as much as 75% when compared with that of the former spouses.[4]

The 1995 Bureau of Labor Statistics has shown that the income of female-headed single parent families is less than half that of two parent families.[7] When women considered divorce, most did not expect to be without money for child support. Absentee fathers who don't pay child support are a major source of their children's feeling of abandonment; physically, emotionally, and financially.

On the other hand, a single-parent

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

father, like Mike, find their responsibilities double as they work until 5:00, cook meals and take care of Saturday cleaning, a chore normally given to their wives. However, Eric does not expect his mother to pay child support to his Dad. He does not feel resentment toward his mother because he is now living in an apartment rather than a house.

Many children in single-mother families do feel resentment because they know their fathers could make their lives financially better but choose not to do so.

Another part of the resource drop for single-parent children may be attributed to the mother's lack of marketable skills and the failure of teenage mothers to obtain them. With limited work skills and minimal child support, many women work two jobs, further reducing time available for caring for children, helping with homework, and communicating with their children.

Single fathers do no have any more time but they are more likely to be able to pay for tutoring and homework support such as computers and encyclopedias.

Possible Solution to Obstacle #3

There are few solutions available to solve this problem.

OBSTACLE #4: Personal Social and Academic Problems

In contrast to two parent families, the single parent does it all. She needs help and often gets it from her children. Her children become increasingly independent as they assume adult roles and become active in family decision-making.[8] They come and go as they choose without efficient adult supervision. They do not report to anyone on a regular basis as there is no one to report to. This results in behavior that gets students into trouble at school.

The in loco parentis policy of schools is not appreciated by children who have become the other adult in many families. The result is conflict with school authorities over absences, tardies, hall and library passes and other control features of school.

Photo by Michael Siluk, New Brighton, MN

Conflicts can exist among teachers, students and administrators in the application of school policy. With children who are very independent, normal conflicts are escalated. Often, children of single parents need an advocate in the system but their parents lack the energy and time to fight for their children. Without a strong mentor, their children may not have the expertise to cope on their own with school difficulties.

Possible Solution to Obstacle #4

Educators and single parents need to consider what schools can do for these children's adjustment. Some may be missing a parent. Some may not be interested in the way the school staff organizes learning.

Others may need an adult to help them understand the social and personal adjustments they are having to make.

Schools should be a place where children can talk to a sympathetic teacher if they are having emotional times. (But, it is not a place where children should be singled out. Single parents' children are often pulled out of class by well-meaning guidance counselors or social workers to discuss emotional problems that are only temporary.")

Emotional difficulties influence school achievement for many children. Many community service agencies and schools have child care, parenting and counseling programs.

Parents could use assistance through workshops, seminars and support groups provided by community agencies or the school system. School officials can inform single parents about school resources available to support their children's academic achievement.

The staff checklist with this article has been prepared for educators to help them examine programs and policies that address areas where difficulties could exist for single parent children.

Conclusion

Administrators, teachers and staff need to examine their relations to single parent families. Children from single-parent homes have specific needs and require support to halt present difficulties that contribute to declining school achievement. They need help with getting to school, completing homework, finding money for school needs and maintaining emotional stability in often changing family situations.

Today's public schools must become an increasingly important source of stability to children in single-parent situations. Mostly female-headed, a single parent family is a structure that presents challenges to educators, counselors, and community leaders. Most single parents feel neither their education nor their upbringing prepared them to become a single parent of one or more children. When the school has no resource center, homework hotline or after-school academic programs, teachers become even more important to these children. Teachers, too, need knowledge in order to address the additional needs of children from single parent homes.

Schools cannot afford to ignore one fourth of their students and their academic needs.

Checklist for School Administrators for Single Parent Students

1. Has the staff developed a system to collect data to learn the characteristics, needs and numbers of students with a single parent?

2. What procedures are established to maintain up-to-date records on changing local family situations of students?

3. What kinds of child care are provided during parent/teacher conferences and other school events?

4. Do the staff and volunteer offer places for study groups, tutors or resource rooms where the children from single parent families can go before during or after school to get help with homework, enrichment or even supervised recreation?

5. Is there a number a child or parent can call to have someone help the child obtain a ride to or from school?

6. Does the school staff avoid celebrating events devoted to just one parent, such as Mother's and Father's Day? Has the staff discussed how such celebrations affect children without a mother or father?

7. Does your school have a sliding fee scale or other provisions for children who cannot pay the usual fees for field trips, ath-

letic events or special events? Is it done so that the process will not call attention to a child who cannot pay the regular fee?

8. Are car pools a part of the planning for before- and after-school events when activity buses are not available?

9. Does the school have a regulation for giving non-custodial parents report cards, conference notices and other information? What is school board policy on this matter?

10. What are board policies (and legal references) regarding visitation rights at school of non-custodial parents? Who at a school is responsible for seeing that such a policy is carried out?

11. What procedures must a school's officials follow if a non-custodial parent appears at school to "pick up" the child, saying that the custodial parent "has approved"?

12. What communication systems are in place for teachers, counselors and school administrators to work with single parents unable to attend regularly scheduled events?

13. Has a teacher/administrator awareness workshop been held on the impact of single-parent families in schools and society?

14. What school projects can be developed in order for single parents to become a part of their children's education?

15. Is a group counseling experience available for children who are dealing with the stress of divorce, abandonment, and remarriage or cohabitation?

16. Are teachers using cooperative grouping to help relationships among children of single parents? (Such grouping will reduce children's social isolation and prevent them from appearing "different.")

17. Are board policies and court rulings followed in policies that prevent kidnapping of a child by an estranged parent at or on a school facility?

18. Are community programs available to provide adult supervision of children of single parents such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, or Big Brothers and Sisters?

19. What linkage does the school have with other community child support organizations such as child welfare, drug rehabilitation and truancy court?-

20. What academic and management support system is in place for teachers with large numbers of children of single parents?

21. Is the single family configuration treated as a dysfunction by counselors or teachers?

22. Have adults been recruited as mentors, discussion group leaders and counselors for children from single parent homes and their teachers?

References

1. Wanat, C.L. (1991) "Of Schools, Single Parents and Surrogates." *Education Week*, May 8.
2. Hargreaves, *Learning Under Stress*...
3. Durth, J. and Zakrya, S.B. (1982) "Schools and the Single-Parent Student: What Schools Can Do to Help." Principal, 60, 24-26.
4. Hargreaves, Margaret. Learning Under Stress: Children of Single Parents and the Schools. (1991) Metuchen, J.F.:Women's Action Alliance, Scarecrow Press.
5. Lina, Mark. (1994) "Income and Spending Patterns of Single-Mother Families." Monthly Labor Review, 117, 29-37.
6. U. S. Government Census, reported 1995. Online service, Netscape, www. census.gov/p..demo/hh-fam.
7. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (1995) On-line service.
8. Barney, J. and Koford, J. (1987) *Education Digest*, 53, 40-43.
9. Wanat, "*Of Schools*..." Education Week, May 8.

Judith Cochran is director of teacher education at the Lake Campus of Wright State University (7600 State Route 703, Celina, OH 45822), and is a single parent.

Communication Commentary

Notes, Citations and Comments About Education's Communication Business

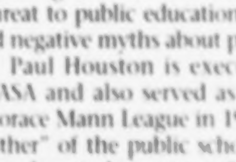
By the Editor

Paul Houston Fights Negative Myths

The past president of the Horace Mann League believes that the number 1 threat to public education is the perpetuated negative myths about public education.

Paul Houston is executive director of AASA and also served as president of the Horace Mann League in 1996. Mann is "the father" of the public school movement, as he advocated a system of common schools that would be free and open to all, without discrimination based on class, religion, race or nationality.

Houston says overcoming the myths must be at the top of the AASA agenda. "I believe that some people would like to end common schools, and **they are using false information** to worsen the public's confidence in our school...we need forceful and courageous leadership by those of us responsible for keeping the concept of public schools alive." His comments were reported in the AASA's *Leadership News* in 1996.



New Book by Bracey Gives Ammunition to Counter False Info

Gerald W. Bracey's latest publication is *Setting the Record Straight*—Responses to misconceptions about public education in the United States. (Assn. for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Stock number 197020; price is $20.95. Order from ASCD, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Fax 703-299-8631.)

Bracey believes that public schools have been attacked unfairly since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983. "This document, a piece of propaganda that made incredibly selective use of data—when it used data at all—was a lie but most of the country took it seriously," Bracey writes.

Bracey takes 18 common "lies" or criticisms of public schools and gives in-depth rebuttals, with references and data to support them.

Among the myths he counters are these:

- We spend more money on public schools than any other nation.
- Spending has increased, but test scores are lower or static.
- The proof that schools are poor are lower SAT scores.

- Our students don't compare well with students in foreign countries.
- Charter schools are the best solution for our failing schools.

The main value of his book to a reader is the building of confidence that the frequent critics or reporters of critical papers more often than not are providing only a partial view or a distorted view of a particular problem.

For example, Pacific Telesis (a business) CEO Sam Ginn told audiences that his managers gave a reading test to 6,400 potential employees, and only 2,800 of them scored high enough that **he would feel comfortable** hiring them. What Ginn did not tell his audiences is that his jobs paid only $7 an hour (or $14,000 a year). Did he expect that America's literati were going to show up to apply for such jobs?...Ginn's attitude was summed up in a "Frank and Ernest" cartoon, in which a personnel director tells those two, "what we want is someone smart enough to pass **our** aptitude test and dumb enough to work for what we pay."

And, to counter the criticism that our public schools employ too many administrators Bracey writes:

"Central office staff account for 1.6 percent of school district staffing...Schools have about 15 frontline employees per administrator as compared with seven employees per administrator in **all sectors of industry**."

(In 1994, we commissioned Bracey to write an article for this *Journal*. "Disarming Information—Ways to Counter Negative Critics" ran in our Vol. 16, No. 1 issue, out in early 1995. A photocopy of the article can be provided free of charge, provided one sends a stamped, self-addressed 9" by 12" envelope to the *Journal* editor.)

How Can Things Do Things?

Writers in mainstream media often use shortcuts, usually to save time or space, and as a result use language improperly.

For example, we frequently hear or see reports that, "Today the White House said..." as if the building could speak. We're supposed to know that it was really someone in the White House talking.

But things can not do things, and we need to take extra efforts to be sure the people references remain primary.

An example, this time in an item written by Tom Infield in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in September, 1997.

He wrote about the President's nomination of U.S. Representative Thomas Foglietta (from Pennsylvania) to become our Ambassador to italy. A bonus of such a post, supposedly, is the ambassador's villa that has at least 18 bedrooms, and Infield quotes several local people that they would hope to be invited to be Foglietta's guests.

But first, Infield writes, he "must be confirmed by the U.S. Senate before he can go to Rome. **Philadelphia has its fingers crossed**."

The National Educational Service's otherwise excellent book, *How Smart Schools Get and Keep Community Support*, is improperly titled. Who are the authors referring to—principals, teachers or a board of education? In the foreword, the authors state: If public education is to survive, it must begin marketing its successes now and it must also adopt a persuasive customer orientation.

The authors might say, "Oh, you know what we mean." But why not be precise and refer to the people who would be responsible for starting marketing plans. There is no **it** responsible for anything in public education, just people.

The National Association of Secondary School Principal's 1996 report *Breaking Ranks* has an excellent section, referred to elsewhere in this *Journal*, dealing with relationships the report's writers suggest that people in high schools start. This is the language the writers use:

"A **high school builds** its success on a series of strong and positive relationships with and among those both inside and outside the building... A high school will regard **itself** as a community...

5. The high school will develop political and financial relationships with individuals and organizations..."

Now, who should be starting and carrying out these fine relationships? Can't we be specific and refer to principals and assistants and counselors and teachers and resource aides and visiting instructors?

One way to do this is to introduce a beginning phrase, such as:

High school administrators, working closely with teachers and other staff members, will:

1. Regard themselves and their students...
2. Engage students' families as partners...
3. Help coordinate delivery of health and social services, etc...

In another report, this one issued by Fairfax County, Va. Public Schools, reference is made by the writers to a new planning process that will involve not just administrators, as had been the case, but **staff members, parents, community members and students**.

Explaining the collaboration planning process, the writers tell the reader: "Schools look critically at students' achievement, develop plans to improve that achievement, and assess their progress in doing so." Wouldn't the reader have been better informed with an early reference to who would be on the planning team, and **then** write that "Each school's team will..."?

Commercial newspapers, television shows, perhaps even magazines contain numerous examples of these **shortcut** techniques. That is perhaps why people in education often use them as well. But cities don't have fingers, and **its** do nothing. We need to keep our focus on **people** and refer to them often.

NASSP Asks: Increased Numbers of Alliances.

A publication was issued in 1996 by the National Assn. of Secondary School Principals, ***Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution***, in partnership with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. One section deals with "Relationships, Reaching out to form alliances in behalf of students." The recommendations in the report, paraphrased by the Journal editor, are:

The high school should be regarded as a community in which members of the staff collaborate on the goals of the school

The high school staff should:

- Engage students' families as partners.
- Help coordinate delivery of health and social services for youth.
- Develop political and financial relationships in the community.
- Foster business partnerships to support and supplement school programs.
- Form partnerships with community agencies.
- Require all students to participate in a service program in the community or school.

The booklet also covers curriculum, instruction, environment,technology, time factors, assessment and staff training. The publication costs $22.50 delivered; send orders to NASSP P.O. Box 3250, Reston, VA 22090. Canada: P.O. Box 70097. Station A. Toronto, Ontario M5W2X5.

Does Coursework in School-Community Relations Have Practical Results? We Seek Citations

We are launching a study of higher education coursework in the area of school-community relations and school PR for prospective school administrators. (See Vol. 18, No. 1 for the genesis of this study, or contact the editor for a free copy.)

We would like to know if such courses are required or elective, and what curriculum is offered.

One of our editorial board members raised a valid point: Can we show evidence that such coursework has practical value to an administrator? Before college department heads would consider making such coursework required for a degree, evidence of the value of such training would be needed.

We seek citations, from recent masters or doctoral students, for examples as to the value of such coursework in their everyday work as a principal or administrator. We'd appreciate statements of three to five paragraphs accordingly.

We request that Journal subscribers post this request in College of Education offices and/or publish the request in a staff newsletter.

Long Distance School-Community Relations Pays Off

Fourth grade students of Ann Howley have a mobile penpal. They correspond weekly with a long distance truck driver who tells them, in turn, where she has been and provides comments about her trip.

The driver was assigned to teacher Howley's class by Trucker Buddy International, Inc. Each trucker agrees to receive mail from elementary class members and write back to them about once a week.

Ann says the program is a fine way to incorporate writing, reading and geography skills in a practical and person-related activity. She teaches at Barden Elementary, Fairfax County Public School, Virginia (telephone 703-780-9886).

Source of this is the *Apple* newsletter, issued by Fairfax County, Va., Public Schools.

Communities in Decline? Are Special Interest Groups Killing Concern for the Common Good?

Thomas Sobol is professor of outstanding educational practice at Columbia University's teacher College. He attended a meeting of public school superintendents at his college last year, and wrote a summary of his observations for *Education Week* that also appeared in *Our Children*, published by the National PTA in Chicago.

Excerpts of his article follow:

"The problem that gripped their attention was the decline of community in America, and the role of public schools in creating and sustaining that community.

"They lament the loss of social cohesion. Gone are the days when people pulled together. They increasingly must deal with special interest groups/people who want gratification of their own wants and care little of the common good. Superintendents see themselves buffeted from all sides for seeing a situation whole and trying to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number.

"We want our children to learn to get along, to experience giving and taking and sharing, to know how to be a constructive member of a group without compromising one's principles. For these purposes, the nature of the school community is of foremost concern.

"Experiments abound to change our public schools. Charters, privatized schools, vouchers—all are being considered. We can learn from these ventures. **But shouldn't we look at the kind of community they create, and look at the kind of community they leave behind?** Maybe we ought to think about what is happening to our society. Do we really want a country in which it is everyone and every group for himself, herself and itself?"

Editor comments: In our present residence or 29 years, we have a sense of community, as Camp Hill was one of the first commuting suburbs of nearby Harrisburg. We have a real, if small, downtown and a boro hall_and an annual parade on Memorial Day and a community park, etc. Our neighboring, more recently settled suburban communities are that in title only and it is almost impossible to locate where one township ends and another begins. One of the greatest problems of "consolidated" school systems, in which most students are bused or must travel a good distance to school, is that the "new" area high school shares nothing of the present or past with the families of the students it serves. Without the auto or bus, the consolidated school cannot exist.

The next logical evolution of schooling may well be through an interactive computer, through which students and their teachers can operate from their own home offices. In this case, we won't even have the artificial school community on the 20 acre site out near the mega-shopping center. All the school students in one geographical area can share time at several mega-stadiums for athletics and sporting events, band concerts, chess tournaments and other activities that require groups of people to be together, face-to-face, for awhile.

Do You Call Them Scholarships or Vouchers? Makes a Big Difference

The Center for Education Reform staff conducted a poll of some 1,000 Americans and asked them: Do you favor "allowing poor parents to be given the tax dollars allotted for their children's education and permitting them to use those dollars in the form of a **scholarship** to attend a private, public or parochial school of their choosing...?" The result: 73% of those polled said they were in favor of this kind of **scholarship**.

On the other hand, the people who conduct the Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll, reported each fall in *Kappan*, found only 24% of American support allowing parents and students "to choose a private school to attend at public expense." Ronn Joekel, PDK's CEO, says the survey of 1996 contained more than half a dozen "private school-related questions to be sure that wording did not skew the results...People are **not** in favor of using public money for vouchers" for private/parochial schools.

This item was reported in *MASB Headlines*, issued by the Michigan Association of School Boards in late 1996.

Ernest L. Boyer Cited...Five Priorities

Former national secretary of education Ernest L. Boyer died in late 1995. Earlier that year, he spoke at the Grosse Point Academy where he outlined five priorities of effective schools. He said that they were based on research with public and private school educators, parents, and 10-year-olds in this and 11 foreign countries while he was president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

These are the five components or priorities (as paraphrased by the editor except for direct quotes from his presentation).

1. **"Build a sense of community within that school, which is an idea people share, a vision or a spirited feeling that generates strong bonds."** To be a community, the school must be small enough for everyone to be known by name (large schools should be reorganized into small units). Teachers are the key, as they must work across classrooms toward shared goals. The circle of community must be enlarged to include parents.

> **"You cannot have an island of academic excellence of community indifference."**
>
> **"Why don't we make the first day of school a national celebration, to forge a strong bond between home and school?"**

2. Help children lay the foundation for a deep understanding of language—the words, numbers and the arts that together make up our system of symbols.

3. **"Develop a curriculum with coherence."** Each child needs to gain a core of essential knowledge—separate disciplines as well as connections across disciplines.

4. **"Create a climate for creative learning."** People need places for active (not passive) learning, where they can be creative (not conforming), where they can learn to cooperate, as well as to compete.

We need to better affirm the essential act of teaching, in which teachers learn to become self teachers.

> **"If we gave as much status to first-grade teachers as we give to full professors, that one act could revitalize the nation's schools."**

5. **"Establish a climate that affirms the building of character for every student."** We need to understand the wholeness of a child—teaching means helping them grow in body, mind and spirit.

> **"If we do not have a whole vision we may deny children perhaps the most important knowledge—the deeper understanding of the sacredness of life and their responsibility to themselves and others."**

Horace Mann said, in 1837, that we should help students develop both **reason and conscience**. This commitment to teaching virtue has dramatically declined today.

> **But "I am convinced that knowledge unguided by an ethical and moral compass is more dangerous than ignorance itself."**

Secondary Principals Endorse Parent and Community People as "True Partners"

The board of directors of the high school principals' association has resolved to encourage "all school administrators and educators to provide opportunities for parents, business people and those in community groups to **actively participate as educators, supporters, contributors and leaders** in the education of our children." The resolution was passed at the board's annual business meeting last year.

The reasons for the resolution were stated as:

- Activities, events, and the interaction of individuals **outside** of school directly affect students in their participation in **school** activities.
- School officials must work with parents and others outside of school to make the education of each student a priority.
- Educators recognize that learning occurs throughout a student's life, **not just in school.**
- Educators, and students, will benefit from the knowledge and support of others if they are **true partners** in the education of our youth.

(Emphasis has been added by the editor, who also paraphrased the actual language of the "where as...be it therefore resolved" document.)

Bad Press...Where Does Poor Reporting Start?

A survey released in August by the Center for Media and Public Affairs showed that even though the homicide rate in the United States dropped by 20 percent form 1993 through 1996, coverage of killing on the network evening news soared by an average of 721 percent during the same period. This distorted coverage affected public attitudes about crime; according to a 1994 Los Angeles Times poll, 65 percent of those surveyed based their feelings about crime mostly on what they saw in the media.

Many educators feel education has fallen victim to the same treatment. A recent survey shows a large majority of educators blame negative media coverage for the decline in confidence in the public schools. However, more than 70 percent of the parents polled said they rely on personal observations and conversations, not the local news media, for information about their children's schools. Some 64 percent said they wouldn't rely on the media when choosing a school for their child. (The survey didn't include non-parents, which make up 75 percent of the community and have less personal contact with schools, and therefore might be more likely to base opinions on media coverage.)

The survey, *Good News, Bad News: What People Really Think About the Education Press,* was conducted for the Washington-based Education Writers Association by Public Agenda, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization. More the 90 percent of the educators agreed that the media's coverage is driven by "what sells" and more than 85 percent said the media unfairly dwell on conflict and failure. Almost 80 percent said reporters use quotes and statistics out of context. On the other hand, 62 percent of the reporters and editors polled said educators unfairly blame the media for simply reporting the news. All three groups—educators, parents and education reporters, agreed that more in-depth reporting would improve education coverage. Unfortunately, the trend in newspapers is toward shorter and shorter articles.

(Reported by the Arizona School Boards Assn., *Report Card,* September 1997.)

A Co-Gus Creator Retires

We ran a "From the Boiler Room" item, starring Gus, the custodian, in our most recent issue.

Word has arrived from the Illinois School Boards Association, where Gus was based since 1971, that co-creator David Carr has retired. Richard Smelter, who joined Carr as writer in 1990, will continue "Gus" alone.

One reason we ran the "Gus" column is to possible stimulate a *Journal* reader to try writing a humor-with-a-point column. Send a sample column or two if the prospect is tempting.

Photo Credits

Addresses for photographers whose work we are using in Vol. 18, No. 3:

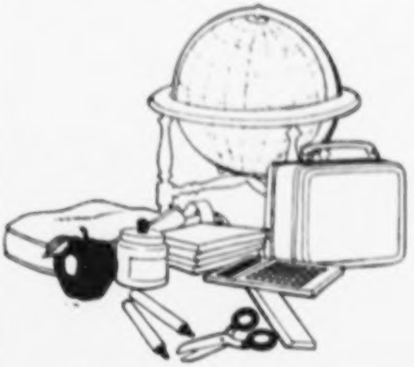
Michael Siluk
1000 3rd St., NW
New Brighton, MN 55112
612-636-5843

Geri Kody
Clark County Schools
4212 Eucalyptus Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89121
702-799-5442

Shirley Haley
1834B Westview
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

Robert Finken
9421 Tuxford Road
Richmond, VA 23236

Other photographs in this issue are by the publisher.



1997 *Journal* Editorial Review Board

Larry Ascough, Elgin, IL

Don Bagin, Rowan College, Glassboro, NJ

William J. Banach, Banach, Banach, Cassidy, Ray, MI

B. Dean Bowles, University of Wisconsin

Carolyn H. Chapman, Univ. of Nevada, Reno

Marsha Chappelow, Overland Park, KS

Floyd Coppedge, State Secretary of Education, OK

Larry E. Decker, Florida Atlantic University

Don Gallagher, professor emeritus, Rowan College

Mel Heller, Loyola University, Chicago

Anne L. Jefferson, University of Ottawa

J. William Jones, PECO Energy Co., PA

Theodore J. Kowalski, Ball State University, IN

William Allan Kritsonis, Lake Charles, LA

Tami James Moore, University of Nebraska, Kearney

Frances Powell, Duval Co. Public Schools, FL

Donna M. Schmitt, Eastern Michigan University

I. Sue Shepard, Southeast Missouri State University

Harriett Stonehill, Megaskills Education Center, Washington, DC

Arthur W. Stellar, Kingston Schools, NY

Philip T. West, Texas A&M

Charles L. Willis, Dayton, OH

Brenda Williams, College of William and Mary, VA

Albert E. Holliday, Editor-Publisher
Journal of Educational Relations
P.O. Box 657
Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #152
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Guidelines for Submission

Relations—The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal–scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles can be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association, **with these exceptions:**

1. **Do not** place last names of authors being cited and the year *within* the text. Number citations sequentially in the text; provide usual citations in **references following the article.**

2. Before the start of the article, include a summary of the scope and major findings of the article in one paragraph.

We encourage you to include photographs, drawings, and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a #10 self-addressed, stamped envelope for acknowledgement of receipt of your article. Include a 9" x 12" similar envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, Journal of Educational Relations, 1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011. 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

The Journal of Educational RELATIONS

PS 026911

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Promoting student achievement through positive school-home-community relationships ✐ Vol. 18 No. 4

About that Survey You Are Planning...

The first survey I conducted was for a PR course requirement in my master's program at Michigan State University. The survey items I used had been prepared by the National Citizens Council for Better Schools, and I surveyed fellow staff members and four administrators in St. Johns, Michigan, Schools where I was employed as speech correctionist and director of information.

The first survey item was a simple one: **Our school system has a clearly written statement of its aims and goals.** The responses were 17 *Yes*, 14 *No* and 13 *Don't Know*. The fact was that the school system *did not* have a written statement of any kind, and yet three of the school's administrators, including the superintendent, and 14 teachers thought we did. A committee was formed after I circulated the response to this item and we had a written aims and goals statement that was approved by the board in six months.

The survey also revealed *opinions* as follows:

- We had an organized guidance program, but it was understaffed.
- Most of our college-bound students were *not* accepted by their first choices.
- Our vocational program *was not* up-to-date.
- Our libraries *did not* meet national standards.
- Our teachers enjoyed *fairly high status* in the community.
- Half of the staff responded that the system *did not* offer them opportunities for "professional growth and recognition."
- One of the few questions to receive a vast majority of *No* responses dealt with the adequacy of teacher salaries. (This survey was conducted in the early 1960s, just before teachers were granted the right to bargain, through their association, on salaries with the board. At that time, what teachers could join was called the teachers' *club*.)

Only a Few Positive Outcomes

I concluded, in my report for the course, that I should not have conducted this study in my own school system for several fine reasons:

- The survey items had not been properly tested before being published. Too many items were poorly worded. For example, one item read "The superintendent brings out the best of our teachers and students." The response of the staff was 17 *Yes*, 15 *No*, and 10 *Don't Know*. That was not a satisfactory response for me, as my superior was the same superintendent. From a statistical point of view, the item was flawed because "teachers and students" were addressed in the same item. If this topic was to be addressed at all, it should have been in two items. The same would be true for the item about "*professional growth and recognition.*"
- A survey involving a group such as this one should be conducted only when results of all questions/items will be published. In addition to the superintendent item, many other responses were of a negative nature for the school system overall. Had I published the results of my study for the staff, a copy would surely have been somehow given to our local newspaper editor. I hesitate to consider what the results would have been for me and the school system.

The main outcome of the survey was to point out the lack of a local goals statement, a fact that was soon rectified. I also learned not to ask politically sensitive questions of my peers, and that survey questions and items must be tested to be sure they are clearly worded.

Al Holliday

Al Holliday
Editor-Publisher

P.S. For our goal statement, see our submission guidelines on the inside back cover.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Vol. 18, No. 4
4th Quarter 1997

IFC **Editor's Column**

5 **The Power of Positive Students**—POPS works for students in a Wisconsin high school. *By Joe Amato.*

11 **Communicator Profiles**—A new department in which communicators and teacheers share insights. *Stephanie M. Bateman (Louisville), Elizabeth Ackerman (Fulton Co., Ga.), Don Bagin (Rowan Univ.), Anna G. Burns (Griffin, Ga.), and Bonnie Berzonski (Fox Chapel, Pa.).*

20 **Foundations—A Source of Alternative Funding.** Plus, a checklist to learn if a district needs a foundation, and what to consider before starting one. *By Phillip F. Messner and Michael W. Graham.*

29 **Case Study—Papa Said There'd Be Days Like This.** Jealousy among teachers creates tension. *By Cathie Brown*

Case Study Response—An Airing of Grievances Will Lend to Understanding. *By John W. Rice.*

37 **Book Reviews.** Involving parents in multicultural schools, questionnaires, education terms, and collective bargaining. *Edited by Arthur W. Steller*

37 **An Open Letter.** *By Edward Butler.*

IBC **Editorial contributor guidelines**

Cover photo by
Michael Siluk,
New Brighton, MN

Subscription Service:
questions,
renewals,
new orders,
change of address,

Call toll-free:
800-537-2624.
Outside U.S.
(717) 766-0574

RELATIONS-The Journal of Educational Relations—ISSN 0741-3653
Editor-in-chief: Albert E. Holliday
Book reviews: Arthur W. Steller
Research/case studies: Philip T. West

The Journal of Educational Relations is published quarterly by the Educational Communication Center,
Box 657, Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657. Telephone 717-761-6620.

Copyright 1998

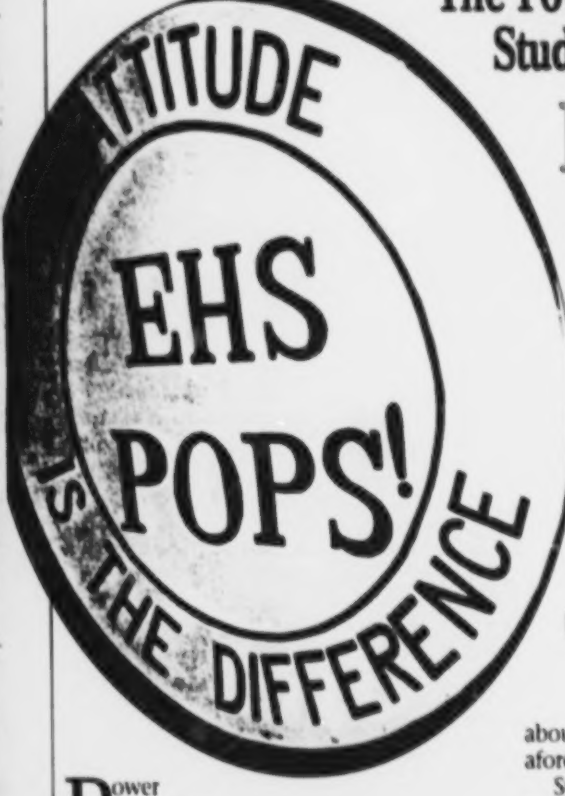
Subscriptions: Individual rate, $48 per year. Single copy, $15. Library rate, $60 per year. Single copy, $20. Add $4 for subscriptions outside of the United States. Payment in U.S. funds.

Periodicals postage paid at Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Journal of Educational Relations*,
P.O. Box 657, Camp Hill PA 17001-0657.

Upon the education of the people the fate of this country depends.

Benjamin Disraeli

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



The Power of Positive Students–

POPS Program at Evansville High School Works

by Joe Amato

Power of Positive Students—POPS—is a nationally recognized program geared to helping students and staff elevate their awareness and uses of positive attitudes at school, as well as in their personal lives. Educators at Evansville High School, a school of 450 students in Evansville, Wisconsin, adopted the POPS philosophy in August 1990. Since then, POPS has become a fundamental component of school life for everyone associated with Evansville High. The author cites improvements in student behavior; major decreases in vandalism and disciplinary infractions; decreases in out-of-school suspensions and the truancy rate; and increases in percentage of students who achieve academic honors.

A frequently overlooked part of what constitutes a successful school is learning climate. Emphasis is usually placed on curriculum, teacher training and various kinds of testing. What people feel, think and care about personally become secondary to the aforementioned.

Such was the case at our high school during the 1980s. As a result, we lost touch with one another as people, Conflicts, which are inevitable in any kind of institution, were not easily resolved. Instead, communication gaps, frustration with one another and bitterness among interest groups seemed to rule the day.

We needed a change. That change came in the form of a new principal. Dr. Mel Lightner began his tenure as our leader during the 1990-'91 school year. Mel brought the concept of the Power of Positive

My first reaction to POPS was, here is another program that we'll soon discard. However, I gave it a try and it has make all the difference in the school...Peter Diedrich, language arts teacher.

People
can
ALTER
their lives by altering their
attitudes.

Julie Woulfe was a POPS student of the week, one of many recognition efforts to focus attention on rewards for positive behavior.

Students—POPS—with him.

From the beginning, Mel emphasized that POPS is simply a blueprint from which to work. We would have to package it and sell it to the students, community and, for that matter, the entire staff.

As luck would have it, the staff realized that we needed something, perhaps anything, that would enhance and improve our school atmosphere. If POPS could help us deal with a rising trend toward vandalism, student fighting, abusive language, plus minimal academic achievement, then it would be more than welcome to one and all.

So, we put it into use in 1990, successfully implementing POPS as a daily part of the Evansville High School philosophy and routine. It has made a difference.

The Components of POPS

Dr. Bill Mitchell, and educator and administrator in South Carolina, developed POPS in the late 1970s and 1980s. Dr. Mitchell has traveled throughout the U.S. and into various regions of the world sharing the POPS philosophy with interested educators. Basic to his philosophy is the premise that positive attitudes can facilitate the attainment of individual self-worth and ultimately lead to personal success. Attainment of these positive attitudes becomes an ultimate goal for both students and staff. To reach that goal, a variety of tools must be incorporated and used by school personnel.

Developing a "vehicle of implementation" is a crucial determinant for becoming a successful POPS school. Our vehicle is the time students and staff spend in daily homeroom sessions. Almost all that we accomplished with POPS had its beginnings in homeroom.

The five POPS attitudes are **belief in self, high expectations, self-confidence, goal setting and self-esteem**. The POPS program also emphasizes life skills such as **human relations, coping and communication**. When we first looked at these components, we realized that before us was a potentially valid recipe for curing what ailed us. If we could find a way to help everyone develop these attitudes and skills, then it seemed reasonable to expect some positive changes in our school environment.

The Tools

Finding effective ways to incorporate POPS into our daily operations and routines was the biggest hurdle we faced. We bought the philosophy and even coined the phrase "Attitude is the Difference" as our POPS motto. Next up, we needed to develop

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I was lacking confidence and had many self-doubts as a freshman. Today I am a confident person, ready to take on life after high school...12th grader Tamra Wissow.

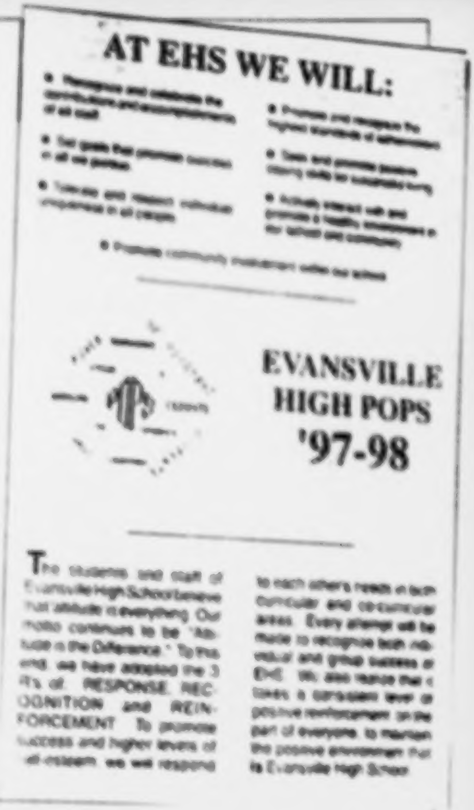
some activities that everyone could use to promote attitudinal change.

The staff took a close look at the POPS tools, which are **conditioning, teamwork, climate, role-modeling** and **reinforcement**. We discussed what each tool was and then brainstormed some starting strategies that would be based on a single tool and combinations of several of them.

From our initial meetings we were able to create some strategies that we believed could elevate the climate of our school. It was our intent to make the school building look like a positive place, so we designed banners/posters and put these up all over the building. Over the front door read the banner—**THROUGH THESE DOORS WALK THE BEST STUDENTS IN ROCK COUNTY**. Two weeks later we changed **Rock County** to **Wisconsin**. By the end of the year, the sign read: **THROUGH THESE DOORS WALK THE BEST STUDENTS EVER**.

We began to provide a daily attitude booster announcement over the public address system along with citations of both student and teacher birthdays. We came up with a birthday card for students. For staff, we have the choir serenade them in their classrooms with the "Happy Birthday" song and a large blueberry muffin.

Simple strategies such as these started to get students talking. Slowly but surely, we began to see a friendlier atmosphere develop.



AT EHS WE WILL:

EVANSVILLE HIGH POPS '97-98

The students and staff of Evansville High School believe that attitude is everything. Our motto continues to be "Attitude is the Difference." To this end, we have adopted the 3 R's of: RESPONSE, RECOGNITION and REINFORCEMENT. To promote success and higher levels of self-esteem, we will respond to each other's needs in both curricular and co-curricular areas. Every attempt will be made to recognize both individual and group success at EHS. We also realize that it takes a consistent level of positive reinforcement on the part of everyone, to maintain the positive environment that is Evansville High School.

The POPS mission statement is on view in hallways and classrooms as a daily reminder of routines expected of students.

To recognize positive behaviors, we provided reinforcement for student strategies such as *Positive Student of the Week*, POPS All-Stars (for cooperation within homerooms), and *On a Roll certificates* (for students who raise their academic performance). These became a routine part of our world. Even simple things like piping music through the P.A. with positive messages such as "You're never fully dressed without a smile" was welcomed and added to the overall creation of a positive climate.

Reaching Out

POPS is also a program that can serve school personnel directly and the community indirectly. Over the years, we have reached out to the community and found a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

School morale has improved since the POPS program was begun in 1990. Recently, students (such as senior Corey Cook) helped with the Jaycee Toys-for-Tots program, and students were "Mr. & Mrs. Santa" who gave gag gifts to the faculty.

variety of ways to connect with each other. Early on, we created a weekly newspaper column, written by me, with the intent of providing awareness of what we were doing and what POPS was accomplishing. Eight years later, this column continues to run weekly (even in the summer) and has been very well received.

Business people have provided financial support for the many strategies we have that involve cost. In return, students from EHS have donated time and energy to helping various groups such as the Lions, the Jaycees, the Optimists, emergency medical technicians, the Red Cross and the Chamber of Commerce. A major part of our program is community outreach, and almost all of our 32 homerooms are linked with one or more community groups, helping out whenever the need arises.

Does It Work?

When we started POPS, I was somewhat of a doubter. After five-plus years of a downward slide, with people treating each other with an apathetic disrespect, I and others doubted that our climate could ever be positive again. Now, after eight years, I no longer doubt that people working together with a common theme and a set of agreed-upon strategies can rebuild a school climate.

For us, it has been the perfect antidote at the most convenient of times. I can't envision our school without a POPS program.

Today, the program is thought of as an ongoing philosophy and a way of life. Our POPS curriculum is in place and we have even added a developmental guidance component to this curriculum to orient students to academic matters as well as life after high school.

How Do We Know It Works?

Over the years, we have kept statistics that verify that this change has had an impact. I can remember, as can the rest of the staff, what discipline was like before POPS. Vandalism, profanity and fighting were everyday occurrences. I recall one day when several other teachers and I had to break up five separate altercations among students.

These and other disruptions made it difficult to teach. Even worse was the fact that students referred for disciplinary infractions were rarely exposed to consequences. Instead, teachers were questioned about whether they had used "proper" procedure in referring the student.

POPS has provided our school with an atmosphere where positive behaviors are encouraged and, when appropriate, rewarded with positive reinforcement. As we did more of this and students recognized that positive choices would satisfy their needs, we began to see more borderline students make positive choices.

Disciplinary problems reduced.

The numbers of problem/disruptive students gradually began to dwindle. For those hardcore cases, Principal Mel used time out areas and parent conferencing to diminish negative choices. Vandalism began to disappear. Our custodial staff continues to mention how little they have to do as far as building repairs. (We did see a brief resurgence of vandalism a year ago when a new class came into the building. However, as the new students began to see the benefits of making positive choices, the vandalism ceased.)

Academic achievement improved.

In 1990, the percentage of students who achieved honors was 39 percent of the student body. In 1993, that percentage had risen to 53 percent. We believe that by creating a positive climate in which to work and by providing appropriate recognition for our staff, teachers are motivated to become the best teachers that they can be. The increase in academic achievement, we believe, is directly linked to the improved climate at our school. Today, even with schedule changes (going from a seven-period day to a four-90 minute class schedule), the percentage of students doing A or B work remains near 50 percent.

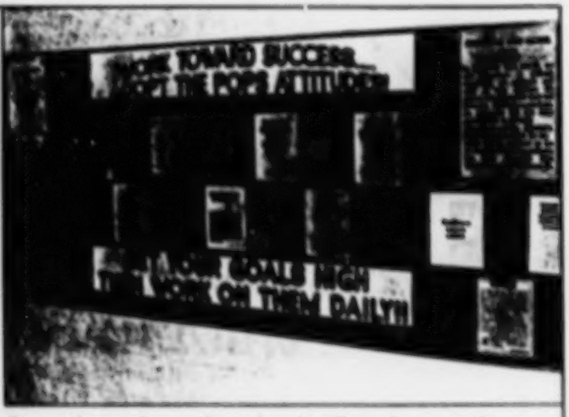
> ***POPS has been, without a doubt, the best thing ever to happen at this school...***
> *Teacher Chris Wagner.*

Students retained are fewer.

We saw our retention numbers (those students retained in their current class because of insufficient earned credits) drop from a high of 39 in 1993 to a low of 18 for the '97-'98 school year. Since the inception of our program, no student has been expelled from our school system. Students who had trouble adjusting to the POPS philosophy and continued to create a disruptive influence were provided with alternative education or schooling through programs provided in the county. As disruptive students found their number of followers dwindling, they found themselves alone as trouble-makers and were therefore more easily handled by the staff.

Suspensions reduced.

In the first three years of the program, we used suspensions (both in- and out-of-school) for students who had made negative choices. More often than not, most of those suspended were repeat offenders. Parents were required to come in for a conference before students who had served out-of-school suspensions were allowed back in. The percentage of students with out-of-school suspensions reached a high of 30 percent for the 1991-'92 school year and has since dwindled to 10 percent. Almost all suspensions today are handled in school with students provided opportunities to do school work under the supervision of a qualified adult. We also added a provision that students with two or more suspensions were ineligible for some of the benefits of the POPS program (such as homeroom-of-the-year trip). I estimate that the students who experience suspensions in a year are



Signs throughout the school call student (and staff) attention several times a day to the POPS program and slogans to help reinforce the philosophy.

no more than 20-25 individuals in a school of 450 students.

The percentage of in-school suspensions has gone up, primarily because we have tried to eliminate out-of-school suspensions as much as possible. By having students in the building, working on their class assignments, with supervision, they learn that "positive choices are better choices," which helps them keep up with their class work.

Attendance improved.

One other statistic that we can point to with some satisfaction is our attendance/truancy rate. Our truancy rate has dropped from a high of 30.5 percent in 1995-'96 to a rate of 14.3 percent today. We are below the state average of 14.6 percent. By the same token, the attendance rate has risen from 89.6 percent in '94-'95 to a rate of 93 percent today.

Has POPS been in large part responsible for these improvements? We believe it has. POPS relates to goal-setting, creating high expectations and working together in teams. It also emphasizes open communication and human relations skills. As students pick up on these skills/attributes and as they are exposed to staff who are committed to the program, they begin to emulate and model the POPS philosophy in their lives.

Conclusion

Here we are, eight years after beginning a program that seemed unlikely to succeed. Yet, we are more united as a staff than ever before. Our student body has achieved at higher levels, in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Representatives of schools from around the area, even as far away as 250 miles, have stopped by and observed what's happening here. The consensus is that POPS works.

With a team effort and a commitment by all, it can make a significant difference in improved student behavior and achievements within the school setting.

Joe Amato is one of two POPS coordinators at Evansville High School (209 W. Main, Evansville, Wisconsin 53536). Rich Krake is the other. They can be contacted at (608) 882-4600 (Fax is 882-6564). Their on-line reference is http:www.inwave.com/~amato.

The POPS coordinators conduct inservice and staff development programs on request.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Communicator Profiles

In this column, we feature personalities from around the country. They share information about how they embarked on their career, their training and role models, and suggestions for improvements in school-community relations.

Be Prepared to Listen

by Stephanie M. Bateman

Motivation for my career:

I have always enjoyed storytelling and decided on a career as a writer at a very young age. I was feature editor of my high school and college newspapers, majored in journalism, and worked as a radio news reporter after college graduation. The move into corporate public relations seemed like a natural progression, and my career evolved from information-gatherer to information-disseminator. I enjoyed the work, but I wanted to do more. Accepting a position in school public relations combined all of my interests and abilities.

When I took the job, the local public schools were experiencing tough times adjusting to a mandated desegregation plan and to the merger of the city and county school systems. The public schools were getting an abundance of negative publicity. I knew things could not be as bad as they sounded—after all I was a public school graduate. I thought that if I could help disseminate accurate information about the district among employees and the community, I would be making a valuable contribution to my town.

My role models:

I have many role models. However, the one person who stands out is the late Barbara Jordan of Texas. She was the most powerful orator I have ever heard. Her address to the Democratic National Convention two

Stephanie M. Bateman is director of communications and publications for Jefferson County Public Schools (3001 Crittendon Dr., Louisville, KY 40209. 502-485-3898). Among her duties is hosting the district's monthly television program, "Beyond the Learning Circle."

decades ago was sensational. I also admire Maya Angelou. Many of the experiences she relates in her books and poetry parallel my own. The rich substance of her work has forever struck a chord in my heart. When I grow up, I hope to have a fraction of her insight.

My best college course:

Obviously all of my journalism and communications courses were valuable, especially public speaking and television production. Had I not taken those two electives, I would not have been considered for a broadcast internship during my senior year. Working on my college newspaper was another valuable experience. However, the one college course that shaped me as a writer was a course called magazine feature writing. In addition to teaching the elements and techniques of a good magazine article, the professor required every student to research the market and submit our final articles for publication. I was lucky. My article was published in *Essence Magazine*.

How people should be trained for their work in education:

Ideally, educational public relations should be a strand within the program of studies for a communications major or minor and for education. At the very least, communications majors interested in school public relations should be able to take education courses as electives to help them understand the dynamics of public schools. In addition, all school administrators—including the PR staff—need to rotate back into the schools periodically, working as teachers, aides, assistants or clerical staff, custodians, or cafeteria staff. This kind of experience helps administrators really understand how schools and students work.

Recommended reading:

The three books I pick are *Preparing Students for the 21st Century* by Donna Uchida, because it helped me see clearly what public schools must accomplish to adequately prepare today's children for tomorrow's world; *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now* by Maya Angelou because it provides inspiration for my soul; and *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff (It's All Small Stuff)*, because it helps me de-stress myself.

How school administrators can improve their relationships:

It is imperative to find new ways to engage the community in the work of schools. The community wants to be a partner with the schools. Educators and administrators must be willing to offer open invitations to parents and others to participate and to provide useful work for them to perform. Parents and community members can do so much more for schools than serving cookies and punch. School administrators also have to be willing to listen to the views of their students, parents and community. If you ask your constituents what they think about certain issues, be prepared to listen and thoroughly evaluate their views. While educational decisions should not be based on popular opinion alone, acknowledgement by school officials and a willingness not to run rough-shod over their feelings go a long way toward building support for and confidence in public schools.

Stand For Something If You Want Respect

by Elizabeth Ackerman

Motivation:

I stumbled into school community relations. After teaching high school English for one year, I was asked to work half-time as a teacher and half-time as a communication assistant. Writing captions and brief articles for release to newspapers were first my daily routines. Three years later I moved

Visualize
Question

Fulton County schools are engaged in an ongoing five-year focus on reading in the system. Ms. Ackerman says her department staff is working with the curriculum and instruction department "to change our corporate culture and community understanding of reading." One outgrowth of the program is a series of posters, created by a local illustrator, to teach the system's four reading strategies—Connect, Predict, Question and Visualize. Copies of "Trading Card" versions of the card and information about the program can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Elizabeth Ackerman.

to a full-time position as a communication specialist. I received on-the-job training from the "masters" at meetings of the National and Georgia School Public Relations associations. For eight years I did almost every job in the Community Relations Office from employee newsletter editor to training for secretaries. Thirteen years ago I was appointed executive director of the Information and Community Relations Department, and I have had few dull days since.

My role models:

My grandmother was my role model. Not only was she my grandmother, but also my second grade teacher. She taught me to listen by reading good books on rainy or cold days in Winter Haven, Florida. She had a strength of character that I admired. She believed that any child could learn anything if given enough time. Staying after school to learn was commonplace. If I made a mistake with my writing assignment, she would sit and wait for me to correct it. I was in awe of her patience. Grown men and women stood tall and went out of their way to greet her as she walked down the street. She was the keeper of our family's history. Being the oldest of 11 children, she kept births, deaths and weddings in the family Bible. Her camera recorded all family events, and her memory was a steel vault. My grandmother's lessons were easy:

- Keep a warm place in your heart.
- Have patience.
- Give all people a chance to be their best.
- Stand for something if you want respect.
- Remember where you came from.

Best learning experiences:

My job requires me to use every college course, skill and experience I have ever had. As a speech therapy major, I learned to diagnose a problem and develop a plan for improvement. So it comes naturally to me now to analyze a public relations situation using the four-step process—research, analyze, communicate and evaluate. Attending the National School Public Relations Association seminars have helped me make sense of all that I knew. Being a classroom teacher gave me the heart to always love the children and understand the daily task of teaching. I take great liberties paraphrasing Walt Whitman's poem to summarize my experiences: *There was a child went forth, and every blade of grass he touched, that blade of grass he became.*

Elizabeth Ackerman is executive director of Fulton County School's department of information and community relations (786 Cleveland Ave., SW., Atlanta, GA 30315, 404-763-6834).

Rewards of the job:

Working with the community is the most rewarding part of my job. Second is teaching others how to communicate and work with the community. We have a culturally, economically and geographically diverse community. Our school system is some 85 miles long, with the Atlanta city school system cutting us in half, which creates a great divide—north and south—in our district. We have two or more of everything from chambers of commerce, PTA councils and a plethora of community groups. The challenge of listening to the concerns of every community keeps my job exciting and unpredictable.

My plans in 10 years:

As a retired employee, I will be the community's number one volunteer for efforts that support children and youth.

Useful courses or experiences for people in our kinds of work:

Courses that teach leadership skills and strategies would greatly enhance our value in the marketplace. The new community leadership style dictates what we need to know including facilitation, negotiation, mediation and consensus building skills. From the irate parent to the community that doesn't want rezoning, all require skillful use of these strategies. Some school public relations specialists believe that we will lose our focus if we pick up responsibilities outside our traditional realm. I can only assume this means taking pictures or writing media releases, messages for the superintendent and newsletters. The scope of our work has shifted in the past 10 years. For example, my department maintains information on the system's web site, oversees business partnerships, encourages volunteerism, supports fund raising for our Education Foundation and participates in collaborative efforts with the community. Leadership skill and strategies are number one.

Recommended reading:

Building Community Support for Schools, an NSPRA publication; *Community Leadership Program*, 1997-98 Series, University of Georgia, Fanning Leadership Center; and *Hand Me Another Brick*, by Charles Swindoll.

Suggestions for administrators:

Schools are not and never were little fiefdoms in isolation from the community. With the public's general attitude about government entities, we can not afford to forget that schools belong to the community. We are being held accountable for what we do now more than ever.

- Build relationships with community leaders and community organizations.
- Invite people into the schools.
- Admit your mistakes and tell what you are doing to correct them.
- Ask the community what it wants and address those needs. If people in the community want a dependable pick-up truck, don't try to give them a fancy, luxury car.
- Accept the fact that we don't know it all. Know the difference between what you **must** decide and what you **may** decide, then share leadership with community and staff.

People Are More Important Than Things

by Don Bagin

My motivation:

Working as a math teacher in a junior high school and part-time as a reporter for a local daily newspaper, I saw the lack of cooperation between school officials and the media. I also saw the poor communications efforts being made by teachers and administrators when dealing with parents. Noting almost no leadership in the field of school public relations, I decided to pursue a career in the field.

Role models:

Dr. Tom Robinson, president of then Glassboro State College. He was active in the National School Public Relations Association, for whom he created *It Starts in the Classroom*, a public relations newsletter prepared for teachers. He was a model of public relations in action, as he ran a rapidly growing college. He took a chance on a 26-year old who was wrapping up his doctoral work in school-community relations at Temple University.

Dr. Leslie Kindred, professor of educational administration at Temple University, recommended me to his colleague, Dr. Robinson. Kindred was nationally-known for his ideas in the field of school-community relations and was the author of two texts in the field. He provided much

Don Bagin is chairman of the public relations/advertising department in the College of Communications, Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ 08028, 609-843-5180. He and Don Gallagher, professor-emeritus at Rowan, are coauthors of *The School and Community Relations*, printed by Prentice Hall.

encouragement and eventually turned over much of his consulting to me and offered me the opportunity to co-author new editions of *The School and Community Relations*, a text being used in more than 150 colleges and universities that is now coauthored with Don Gallagher.

Useful courses:

The courses that helped the most while pursuing various degrees were school public relations, management, social psychology, various public relations internships and communication skills courses in publication preparation, media relations and all kinds of writing. Seminars in leadership and seminars conducted by NSPRA were also extremely helpful, as established PR practitioners were quick to share ideas that worked for them.

Rewards from my efforts:

The most rewarding: knowing that some communications contribution I make brought about actions that helped people learn better. These include passage of a budget or bond issue; an inservice workshop for staff members that helped passage of a budget or bond issue; an inservice workshop for staff members that helped them work more effectively with each other, students and parents; a strategy suggestion to the superintendent or college president that resulted in a "victory." At the college teaching level, the most satisfying feeling comes from watching graduates succeed in their practice of public relations and following their many successes in leadership roles in the field. One graduate of Rowan University's M.A. program in school public relations is Rich Bagin, now executive director of NSPRA. Another alumnus—Bob Grossman—served as NSPRA president.

Useful experiences:

To prepare people to serve as school-community relations specialists, I would insist on some experience that taught them how to deal with people. I have found that students who worked in a 7-11 dealing with customers or who waited on people in restaurants seem to adjust to the many people-demands of the PR position in schools much more comfortably than others do. Also, students should take enough courses to understand the demands of other school administrators; they must be familiar with the jargon, too. Of course they need the journalistic and basic PR skills and the confidence to know when to tell the boss he or she is wrong. This can probably be attained best by serving an internship with a professionals in the field. As PR guru Ed Bernays insisted, everyone who wished to practice public relations should be well-versed in social psychology.

Suggestions for chief school administrators:

- Work with board members to help them see the importance of school-community relations.
- When hiring administrators, teachers and other employees, seek good communicators.
- Build communication evaluation into everyone's evaluative criteria.
- Communicate to all employees that communication is a priority; employees tend to emphasize those things the boss wants done.
- Remember that people are more important than things. Build a communications program based on as much people-to-people communication as possible. When colleagues and customers know and trust you, it's appreciably easier to gain and retain their support.

Improvements Result from Relationship Building

by Anna G. Burns

My motivation:

When I was recruited for the job of leading a school-business partnership group, I had volunteered in education and in our community for several years; I thought that experience would be beneficial. Later when asked to do the job of school system public relations in addition to the school-business partnership, I reasoned that the two complemented each other, As I have taken on the duties of grant-writing and directing the elementary after-school program in addition to public relations, marketing and school-business partnerships, I found the common threads were services that connected the community with schools in mutually beneficial situations. I am continually motivated by filling educational and community needs creatively and effectively.

Anna G. Burns is director of school and community services for Griffin-Spalding County Schools, (P.O. Drawer N. Griffin, Georgia 30224. 770-229-3700). Recently, she coordinated a three-day visit of Japanese educators in her schools. At a farewell dinner, she and other local educators were shown how to write Japanese calligraphy.

Role models:

One of the people who hired me for my first job in the educational setting was a central office administrator who became my mentor. Judy Byrd was the public relations/staff development director who taught and guided me. I trusted her integrity and judgement, and I learned public relations skills and professionalism from her. She began my career in public relations.

Useful experiences:

The most valuable undergraduate college experience was the liberal arts curriculum itself. Although my B.A. degree is in history, all of the course work enabled me to be a better thinker, problem-solver and generalist. While earning my specialist degree in educational administration, I was greatly influenced by a professor in a leadership course who introduced me to the servant-leader concept. Reading leadership literature, being trained in Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and participating in citizen-led *Leadership Georgia* have influenced me the most in the last five years.

Rewards of the job:

The most rewarding parts of my job are those that establish productive relationships between the external public and educators to improve student achievement. These relationships enrich both students' and adults' personal and professional lives. Examples of activities and strategies are school-business partnerships; citizen and student leadership courses; and job swaps between school principal and department store manager, for example. I have seen the most improvements in education result from relationship buildings.

Recommended reading:

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey, and *Executive Excellence*-The Magazine of Leadership Development, Managerial Effectiveness, and Organizational Productivity.

Suggestions for administrators:

Ask for continual feedback. View a complaint as a compliment, it costs nothing. Encourage educators to begin dialogue with—not talk at—parents and other stakeholders. Really listen, and, ask students how our schools are doing and how we can improve education.

Be Open and Honest With Reporters

by Bonnie Berzonski

Role models:

My mentor is Pamela Williams. Mrs. Williams hired me to do freelance work for this school district right after my graduation from college. It began with writing a few articles for newsletters and press releases and it eventually grew into a part-time job. After Mrs. Williams left the district to pursue other career endeavors, I was hired to replace her in the full-time Coordinator of Communications position.

Even though I was young when I was hired, Mrs. Williams had a great deal of faith in my abilities as a school public relations person. She has taught me everything I know about school public relations and afforded me opportunities to gain hands-on experience. I still consult with her a great deal about school public relations issues and her ideas and opinions mean a lot to me. Additionally, she has also been a great friend.

Useful experiences:

I served an internship at a television station in Columbus, Ohio. This internship allowed me to learn a great deal about the inner-workings of a news organization. I also learned how to address people in various situations. The station permitted me to do a great deal during my internship such as go out with photographers on news stories. I was a resident assistant during my senior year of college. Dormitory life teaches students a great deal about the real world. I dealt with problems and got to know many people in a different way than I would have if I had not been a resident assistant.

When I first graduated from college, I did a great deal of writing through my part-time employment with a small, local newspaper. I am very grateful for my newspaper experience because it has helped me see school issues from not just a school perspective, but the media's perspective (which can, many times, be very different). This experience has helped me with the reporters I deal with every day. It also helped me learn to deal with different types of people in various situations.

Rewards of the job:

It means a lot to me when school employees I hold a great deal of respect for recognize the true depth and importance of my work. For instance, last summer I was working on the district *1997-98 Art and Activities Calendar*. The art teacher who worked on the calendar with me expressed, several times, that she was never aware of the amount of work associated with my part in the production of the calendar. I devote many hours to be sure the calendar is as precise, in all ways, as it can be. I believe that there are countless benefits derived

Bonnie Berzonski is coordinator of communications for Fox Chapel Area Schools (611 Field Club Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15238, 412-967-2452.) One of her special projects this past year was publicizing a student-sponsored telethon (with two cable companies) in which Fox Chapel students raised $21,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Western Pennsylvania.

from the work of a school public relations professional. However, many of them are indirect and can be difficult to measure. Too many people do not quite yet understand the value and benefits of the school public relation professional

I am also very proud of the relationships I have developed with the members of the media. I have worked diligently to be open and honest with reporters (I have even initiated the first contact in crisis situations) to be certain the Fox Chapel School District is always portrayed in the best possible light. I also enjoy it when, through press releases, I am able to get information about student accomplishments printed in local newspapers. You know that students' activities highlighted in articles are important to particular students, and such articles are something they and their families will always cherish and save.

There is no better teacher than experience, especially for public relations people working in the school setting. Even more important and effective than book learning is what I learn—every single day—on the job. Each day is different with new joys, problems and challenges.

I also think courses in time management would be helpful for this type of work. The main priorities usually stay the same, but I encounter new and different day-to-day priorities every day.

Suggestions for members of the school family:

The suggestion I offer is something I feel the people in our school district are already good at: All of us, no matter what our profession, need to listen to the people we serve. A school district is not run by just the one person in charge. School employees, parents and community members need to work together and compromise for the sake of the education of children. Parents know their children, but educators know education, and both must respect each other and work together for positive outcomes for the children. All parties need to share their knowledge for the kind of growth from which everyone will benefit.

Statement of Ownership
Journal of Educational Relations, #688230; Filing date Oct. 1, 1997; published quarterly; $48; mailing address of publication, publisher and editor and headquarters is 1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, Cumberland County, PA 17011. Editor and owner is Albert E. Holliday at the same address.
Extent and nature of circulation of average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months (and actual number of issue published nearest to filing date): net press run 1,000 (800); sales through dealers or counter sales 0 (0); paid or requested mail subscriptions 762 (629); total paid and/or requested 762 (629); free distribution by mail 40 (15); free distribution outside the mail 150 (25); total free distribution 190 (40); total distribution 952 (669); office use 48 (131); returns from news agents 0 (0); total 1000 (800); percent paid 80 (94). Signed Albert E. Holliday, Publisher.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Foundations—A Source of Alternative Funding for Schools

SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION
AWARD HISTORY FACT SHEET

This is a partial report of fund distribution for the Springfield Foundation.

by Phillip E. Messner and Michael W. Graham

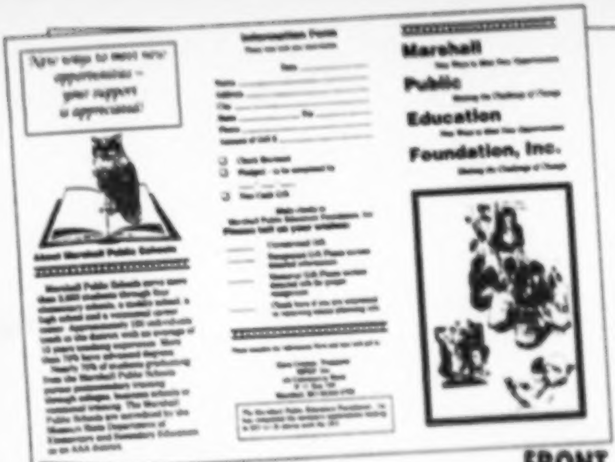
School-related foundations can hold high potential to school districts to provide alternative funding for support educational activities not normally funded within the regular school budget. The purpose of this article is to report a study the authors conducted about not-for-profit foundations that have been established in Missouri at public school districts.

The authors found, through a survey of all school districts in the state, that the primary purpose of school-related foundations is to provide financial resources beyond the scope of the regular budget; that a high percent of the school-related foundations use sophisticated and high cost fund-raising methods; and that the dollar amount of support by school-related foundations has increased rapidly over the past three years. About 20 percent of Missouri school districts report an association with school-related foundations, as of 1996.

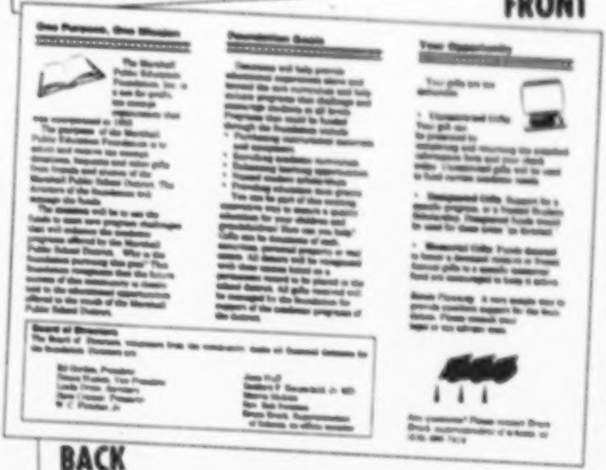
Public school activity funding through not-for-profit school-related foundations is an emerging phenomenon. Officials in many public schools are considering the establishment of school-related foundations because the regular school budget does not always support all of the activities that educators, parents and community leaders desire to enhance the traditional curriculum. In other cases, failed school levies have led to the elimination of extra-curricular programs, such as athletics, music and/or art. To address these concerns, a not-for-profit foundation can be established by a school district to support those programs highly valued and desired by the community.

Research concerning this new alternative funding source in public schools could prove to be significant and important for educational and community leaders as they struggle to support extra-ordinary school activities. The authors conducted a survey in early 1997 to investigate the status of school-related foundations in Missouri. The processes and results discovered through the survey are presented in the following

BEST COPY AVAILABLE


Information Form
Marshall
Public
Education
Foundation, Inc.

FRONT



BACK

This is an example of a brochure used by the Marshall Foundation to describe the foundation's purposes and process.

sections.

Definition of a School-Related Foundation

The school-related foundation is a not-for-profit corporation with IRS 501(c)3 tax-exempt status established by a public school district or school with the purpose of providing financial resources beyond the scope of the regular public funded budget to encourage extra-ordinary educational activities.

Does Your District Need a School-Related Foundation?

When should the school official consider the start-up of a school-related foundation? If the answer is "yes" to three or more of the following questions, the official should look into the potential for alternative funding through a foundation.

School-Related Foundation Need Survey

Has your district...

1. Been the beneficiary of a contribution from an estate or other source that requires management? Yes No

2. Experienced cut-backs in extra-curricular programs due to national, state or local fund reductions? Yes No

3. Experienced increased competition from public, charter or private schools that have school-related foundations?
Yes No

4. Established school-business partnerships to support extraordinary educational activities?
Yes No

5. Adopted non-traditional school and staff development models that require extraordinary funding and support?
Yes No

6. Established a large number of student and faculty scholarships that need coordinated management?
Yes No

7. Identified a need to develop stronger school-community relationships?
Yes No

Methodology

A 10-item survey, the *Missouri Public School Foundation Survey*, was developed to identify the status and activities of local school-related school foundations in Missouri. The survey covered the makeup of foundation boards and the amount and type of support activities supported by foundations from 1993 through 1995. Responding school district officials were also requested to provide copies of printed materials about their respective foundations. The survey was mailed to all 548 Missouri school district superintendents. There were 218 completed and useable survey forms for a 40 percent return rate. Of the 218 respondents, 46 (20%) responded that they have an association with a private foundation. The majority of school districts associated with school-related foundations are large districts, usually located in suburban or urban settings.

Survey Finding and Results

For ease of interpretation and organization, analysis of survey results was organized into the following discussion sections: foundation mission statements; foundation organization structures; legal aspects of foundations; and fund-raising and awards programs.

Mission statements. Of the 46 school districts that comprised the study group, 17 submitted printed materials used to announce and administer foundation activities. Foundation mission statements were reviewed for content. This review yielded a common theme: "to provide financial resources beyond the scope of the regular budget." The mission statements also included information about the type of programs supported by the foundations, including:

- To stimulate innovation and experimentation in the classroom,
- To upgrade alternative funding sources,
- To support athletic clubs, and
- To provide student scholarships.

Organizational structures. The survey covered the structure of foundation governing boards, as shown in Table 1 through Table 4. A distribution study of board membership revealed that the majority of foundation boards, more than 61%, used between five and nine members to govern foundation activities. About 26% of the boards consisted of 10 to 20 members (See Table 1).

Table 1
Distribution of foundation board membership by number and percent.

Number	n	%
Less than 5 members	3	7.7
5-9 members	24	61.5
10-20 members	10	25.7
more than 20 members	2	5.1
total	39	100.0

The method of appointment of foundation board members was also studied. About 94% of the respondents reported that appointment and/or approval by school district boards of education was required, as shown in Table 2. In only one case each, alumni elected the board of directors or board membership was open to volunteers.

The length of appointment to foundation boards was reviewed. Three-year terms were the most common and 10% of the districts had established one- or two-year time limits for board membership, as shown in Table 3. However, more than 20% reported that time limits had not been set for mem-

Table 2
Method of appointment of foundation board members.

Method of appointment	n	%
Board of Education	31	93.9
Alumni	1	3.0
Volunteer	1	3.0
total	33	100.0

bership on their foundation boards. Although time limits on board membership were reported for the majority of foundation boards, the respondents also indicated that in many cases board members were not precluded from being re-appointed for as many terms as they desired to serve.

Table 3
Length and term of foundation board members.

Term Length	n	%
1 year	4	10.5
2 years	3	7.9
3 years	23	60.5
indefinite	8	21.1
total	38	100.0

When the type of service provided by foundation board members was studied, it was found that more than 97% of the members are unpaid volunteers. Only one district paid foundation board members; all the others are unpaid.

Legal and financial documents. Respondents for only 16 school-related foundations reported that they had published incorporation by-laws. Of those 16, 10 districts provided copy of their written by-laws. A review of these by-laws revealed that they generally contained the same information in accordance with Missouri state law. An outline example of incorporation by-laws is presented below:

- Article I: Purposes
- Article II: Directors
- Article III: Officers
- Article IV: Committees
- Article V: Execution of Instruments
- Article VI: Gifts and Contributions
- Article VII: Liability and Indemnification
- Article VIII: Independent Audit and Fiscal Year

Further review shows that 43% of the responding school officials indicate that

What to Consider Before Starting A Foundation

School administrators should consider the following policy and procedure suggestions before starting a school-related foundation:

- **District board as a model.** Although school-related foundations are technically private in nature, the cautious school administrator is well advised to use the local district board of education structure and procedures as a model for handling foundation actions. Foundation board members should be subject to the same standards of scrutiny, review and availability as are local boards of education members. Foundation board meetings should also meet the same standards of openness and accessibility (i.e., sunshine law) as local board meetings. By meeting district board standards, many potential opportunities for foundation abuse and misunderstanding can be avoided.
- **Training of foundation officers and board directors.** Many states require training for newly elected local district board of education members. Training of foundation board members is also imperative. Group decision-making is not necessarily an easy process: training in decision-making skills has been shown to be effective. State and national school board associations have the expertise and experience to do board training and should consider assisting local districts with the training of their foundation boards. Another possible source of training expertise would be area not-for-profit organization leaders from the Red Cross, United Way, or area foundation leaders such as a local university foundation director. Training should consist of team building, group consensus building, legal and ethical responsibilities and fund raising techniques. A minimum of eight hours of training is suggested.

Continued on page 25.

Things to do to establish a school-related foundation:

The development of a school based foundation should include the following processes (Note: Allow six months to one year for start-up):

1. Identify a need and purpose for the foundation
2. Develop a mission statement
3. Develop foundation organizational structure
    - 3.1 recruit board of directors
    - 3.2 identify volunteer staff
    - 3.3 identify foundation chief executive officer
    - 3.4 identify foundation support resources
    - 3.5 conduct background checks for foundation board, staff and volunteers
4. Prepare legal and financial documents
    - 4.1 identify appropriate not-for-profit tax attorney
    - 4.2 draft by-laws and file for not-for-profit corporation status
    - 4.3 file for IRS 501(c)3 tax-exempt status
    - 4.4 file tax returns (annually)
    - 4.5 develop and publish board procedures and volunteer guidelines
5. Develop foundation fund-raising and awards programs
    - 5.1 develop a case statement and other promotional materials
    - 5.2 prepare fund-raising activities
    - 5.3 prepare fund distribution guidelines
    - 5.4 solicit applications for foundation awards
    - 5.5 distribute foundation assets (annually)
    - 5.6 prepare annual reports

they are a not-for-profit corporation in Missouri. **This relatively small proportion of school-related foundations points to a potentially weak area in Missouri School-related foundation activity.**

Fund-raising Foundation Programs. The last step in the development of a foundation is to prepare strategies by which the foundation can accept gifts and donations. Results from the survey suggest that the most common fund-raising activities were annual giving programs, followed by endowment programs and corporate giving programs, as shown in Table 4.

The annual fund-raising strategy was the most commonly used by foundation officials. This may be due to the low cost, in terms of personnel and resources, for conducting an annual campaign. However the frequent use of endowment and corporate giving programs was an unexpected finding. These types of fund-raising campaigns require higher expertise and have higher associated personnel and fund-raising costs. Deferred giving programs require sophisticated fund-raising and management methodologies and the use of this alternative funding source is limited in Missouri.

A study of the amount and number of awards was then undertaken. This study found that both the number of foundations making awards and the number of awards per foundation increased from 1993 through 1995. In 1993, 20 foundations made an average of less than five awards, with a total of 95 awards. In 1995, 26 foundations made an average of more than six

Table 4

Type of foundation fund-raising strategy by number and percent.

	YES		NO	
Fund-raising strategy	n	%	n	%
Annual	21	60.0	14	40.0
Endowment	20	57.1	15	42.9
Corporate	17	48.6	18	51.4
Endowment	8	22.9	2	77.1
Other	11	31.4	24	68.6

awards each, for a total of 160 awards. This finding represents a 30% increase in the number of foundations giving awards and more than a 68% increase in the total number of awards in just three years.

This trend was also reflected in the size of foundation awards granted to their sponsoring school districts, only even more so. In 1993, 20 foundations awarded an average of $9,663, whereas in 1995, 25 foundations awarded an average of $13,454, a 71% increase per average award. Total foundation dollars awarded increased from $231,912 in 1993 to $417,088 in 1995, a 56% increase over the period. (These sums do not reflect a very large one-time donation of $7,000,000 at one of the reporting foundations.) The total number of dollars from private support has increased substantially during the three-year period.

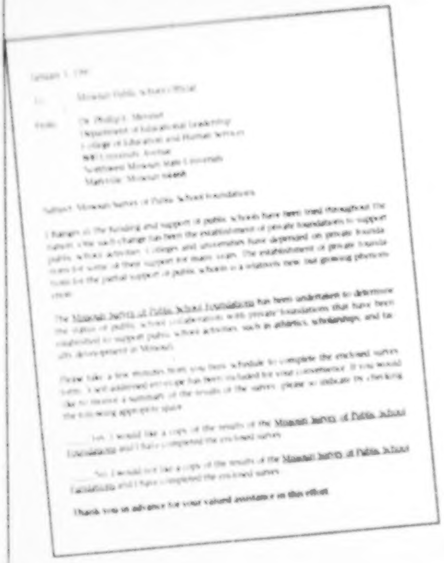
To publicize foundation activities and programs, foundation officials have developed a variety of print materials for distribution, as found in Table 5. Mission statement brochures were the most common publication, with about 6% of districts printing this type of document. Printed foundation announcements were prepared by less than 50% of the districts; about 40% printed award procedure announcements; and about 35% prepared annual reports. The quality of promotion materials varied a great deal. School districts with large endowments and plentiful personnel resources prepared the highest quality materials. Note: See examples of publication materials.

The final study involved an assessment of the type of education programs supported by foundations. As shown in Table 6, student scholarship programs are the most frequently supported educational activity. Classroom curriculum and instruction activities are the next most frequent type. Capital improvements, faculty and staff development and athletic support followed. These findings validate the intent and pur-

Continued from page 23.

- **Guidelines for volunteers to serve foundation boards.** It is now considered standard practice for boards of education to have published policy and procedure manuals. School-related foundations should also have published guidelines for board members and volunteers. State and national school board associations have expertise and experience in the development of policy and procedures manuals. This expertise could be directed toward assisting school-related foundation directors in the development and publishing of volunteer guidelines. Review of other foundation volunteer guidelines would also be of value to the novice foundation director.
- **Background checks on foundation volunteers.** Foundation volunteers should be subject to the same background check standards that apply to all other school employees. As foundation volunteers may have access and contact with school-age children, background checks are a necessary precaution. Foundation directors should use the same policies and procedures, established by state controlling agencies, being applied by local school district administrators.
- **Financial accountability and responsibility.** Although IRS 501(c)3 tax code requirements differ from local district financial reporting requirements, school-related foundation boards of trustees have fiduciary responsibility like those of local school district boards of education. By applying the same audit and control standards currently being used by the district, foundation directors may avoid potential abuse and misuse of funds. State and national school board associations are a source of expertise to advise the foundation director on not-for-profit financial accountability and board responsibility. **The use of an attorney to prepare foundation incorporation and tax status and reporting documents is highly encour-**

Continued on page 27.



pose of public school-related foundations as found within published mission statements.

Conclusions

Public school boards and staffs struggle to meet the basic educational needs of their diverse student populations through their regular budget. Many school leaders have found that a foundation can be a means of alternative funding to provide extra-ordinary resources to support a variety of educational activities desired by the staff and community members. A survey of school-related foundations associated with Missouri's public schools has generated finding that support the following conclusions:

- The primary purpose of Missouri school-related foundations is to provide financial resources beyond the scope of the regular budget.
- The majority of school-related foundations are associated with large school districts.
- The number of members of school-related foundation boards of trustees range between five and nine members with three-year unpaid terms after appointment and approval by the district school board.
- A high percent of school-related foundations use sophisticated and high-cost funding raising strategies, such as endowment and corporate fund-raising.
- The number and size of dollar support by school-related foundations has increased rapidly over the past three years.
- A majority of school-related foundations are not incorporated.
- A wide variety of publication materials promote foundation activities; however the quality of materials varied greatly.
- Student scholarship activities are most frequently supported by these foundations.

Implications

Officials in school districts that lack the resources to provide extra-ordinary programs demanded by their communities should investigate school-related foundations as an alternative funding source. Public school officials, especially those in larger school districts, need to become skilled and proficient in the use of this alternative support strategy. University educa-

Table 5
Number and percent of foundation publication methods.

	YES		NO	
Publication type	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Brochures	22	59.5	15	40.5
Announcements	18	48.7	19	51.3
Award procedures	15	40.5	22	59.5
Incorporation by-laws	16	43.2	21	56.8
Annual Report	13	35.1	24	64.9
Operating procedures	12	32.4	25	67.6
Other	6	16.2	21	83.8

Officials for the Washington Foundation issue a newsletter on occasion to describe recent grants and highlight news regarding foundation activities.

tional administration and leadership faculty should also become aware and knowledgeable about public school-related foundations as an alternative funding source and include training in the use and applications of such processes into educational leadership and finance coursework.

Information-sharing about this alternative funding source will become increasingly important. Toward this end, a web page

Continued from page 25.

aged. Foundation directors should also seek tax code advice from a not-for-profit tax attorney.

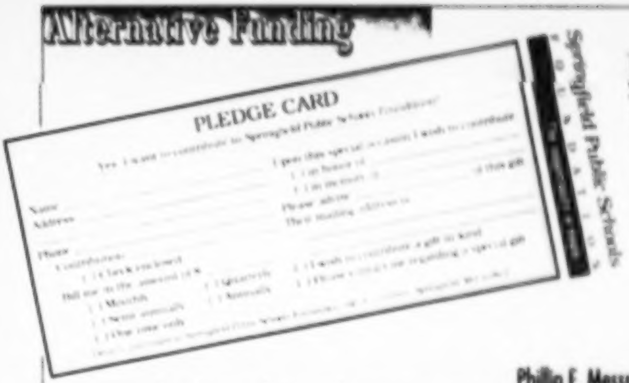
•**Financial investment of assets.** School-related foundations have the potential to build very large endowment and cash resources. Regardless of their size, all assets need very careful fund management if they are to reach their full potential. Foundation directors are advised to use very conservative investment strategies. Foundation directors should seek management assistance from local financial planners and bankers. Bank trust accounts, while conservative, tend to have very high management costs. One strategy small foundations are using to reduce fund management expense is to pool or bundle foundation investment portfolios with other not-for-profit investment funds. This strategy should be used with caution.

• **Qualifications of foundation director.** The foundation director in the case of small school districts most likely will be the school superintendent. Larger schools may have the resources to hire a part-time foundation director; schools with very large foundations may hire full-time directors. In all cases, the foundation director should be treated like all other district employees and subject to all state and district rules and regulations. It is recommended that a foundation director have the following qualifications: be a trained and certified educator; have a strong community presence; and be people-oriented, creative, a good writer, flexible, a good manager and trustworthy.

Suggested references. The following references may be of assistance and value to the novice foundation officer for the development and administration of a school-related foundation.

• Rasmussen, K.B. (1993). *The school foundation workbook: a step-by-step guide to developing new funding*. Alexandria, VA: Capitol Publications.

• Weiner, R. (1994). *Creating a school foundation: How to develop new funding sources for your district*. Alexandria, VA: Capitol Publications.



PLEDGE CARD

Name

Address

Phone

Springfield Public Schools

This pledge card of the Springfield Foundation illustrates the various ways that gifts can be specified as well as paid in installments.

has been designed to communicate the findings of this study across Missouri and the country. (See www.nwmissouri.edu/~100516/found.html). A vertical file has also been established in the Owens Library's Teacher Resource Center at Northwest Missouri State University to house collected printed material. This file is available for school leaders to use at the Center as they research the potential, efficacy and methodology for the establishment of a school-related foundation. Readers might wish to suggest that their own school board association or university establish such files for school official reference.

Three Special Issues

In addition, we urge that school board and school administrator association officials at the state or national levels give attention to these three special issues:

- Research should be directed toward analysis of private school-related foundation expertise and fund-raising skill that could be applied in public education.
- A nationwide study should be undertaken to determine the extent of this emerging alternative funding strategy.
- A need exists for the creation of a public school-related foundation study center to support field application and advancement of this alternative funding source.

Table 6
Number and percent of foundation support by program type.

Program/Activity	YES n	YES %	NO n	NO %
Scholarship	28	70.0	12	30.0
Curriculum & instruction	18	45.0	22	55.0
Capital improvements	17	42.5	23	57.5
Faculty and staff development	15	37.5	25	62.5
Athletic	8	20.0	32	80.0
Other	5	12.8	34	87.2

Phillip E. Messner and Michael W. Graham are associate professors in the Department of Educational Leadership at Northwest Missouri State University (Maryville, Missouri 64468, 816-562-1231). Dr. Messner is coordinator of the cooperative doctoral program, and Dr. Graham is department chair. The department is located in the College of Education and Human Services. The research reported in this article was supported by a Northwest Missouri State University Faculty Research grant.

References

Rasmussen, K.B. (1994, October). "Resources: The school foundation workbook." *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 24(2), 45.

"School foundation awards grants." (1996, December 16). *Indianapolis Business Journal*. p.33.

Weiner, R. (1994, January). "Resources: Creating a school foundation." *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 23(4), 44-45.

CASE STUDY

Papa Said There'd Be Days Like This

Jealousy among teachers creates tension in a junior high school

by Cathie Brown

Tomi Hillcroft leaned back in the old, brown leather executive chair in her junior high office. She had finally become a principal.

Her new position was in Gladstone in a mid-Atlantic state. It was part of a large district with 20 elementary schools, five junior highs and three high schools. Similar to many small cities in the East, Gladstone suffered from a general decline due to the big malls in the suburbs and factories moving to the South to hire cheap laborers. Its appearance seemed old and run-down. The socioeconomic level was low in two of the three high school areas. Attendance was substandard and the dropout rate was reaching an all-time high. There was not much gladness in Gladstone these days.

Tomi was aware of the rising crime and gang influence, particularly at David Charles Junior High where she was the newly appointed principal. However, this school was where her father had started his career 35 years ago and it was exactly where she wanted to be now. It was like coming home. The school had seemed ancient to her as a young child. She remembered running through the narrow halls when her dad, Tom, was there for basketball games and sitting in the brown leather chair pretending to be the principal. Tomi's plan was to follow in her father's footsteps and become a superintendent as he had.

Tomi's dad had passed away three years ago. She remembered many conversations with him, mostly about the highs and lows of school administration. He had mentioned several times how difficult it was to be fair to all, but that the position demanded fairness if a principal wanted a trusting climate in the school.

Tomi Hillcroft did not realize that the lows would hit so soon. She had barely begun and her administrative "fairness" was already being tested. She wished that she could talk to her dad about the problem she was facing.

Before the former principal had left David Charles Junior High, he met several times with Tomi Hillcroft and spoke of a particular problem in the computer department. A great deal of tension was developing between Carol Baker, a highly trained, district computer expert and Bob Kitczienski, a third-year teacher at the junior high. He told the new principal that he had been unable thus far to resolve the situation between them, so Tomi was left with the problem.

The stage was set when the site-based committee of David Charles Junior High voted for an extensive computer program for the school, in conjunction with the high school's plan to improve technology training for the students. District representatives had met with community leaders last year to develop a program that would

Tomi was handed the computer department problem by the outgoing principal, who said he couldn't solve it.

prepare students for the demands they would face in most work situations. Bob Kitczienski had been appointed to develop a course outline for the junior high level.

Bob lived in the community where the junior high school was located. He knew most of the students and their families well and was highly respected. Both he and his wife were active in community affairs; they spoke at many school board meetings in defense of the students and programs at D. C. Jr. High. He believed that he knew what the students needed and was irritated that other personnel were being sent to his school to "save his students." His political clout with the parents had influenced the relationship he had enjoyed with the former principal.

The other major figure in the situation, Carol Baker, was new to the school last year although she had been with the district for three years. With an extensive background in technology and training, she was working on an advanced degree and also taught at the community college. Carol had implemented many technology workshops for the district and was involved in writing curriculum on the same subject. When her job was dissolved due to restructuring, she was assigned by the district to work with Bob on the new junior high level technology project.

Carol was excited about the prospects of this program, but she also realized that she was the new kid on the block and would have to let Bob set the pace. She did not know how close-knit the technology department staff was.

Another teacher, Stanley Zooker, and a paraprofessional, Shirley Callie, made up that staff. Stanley was a second-year instructor and new to the technology department. He admired Bob and appreciated his help with the new computers. Stanley and his family were active in both the community and their church. They had moved to Gladstone when he had taken an earlier position as math teacher of the sixth grade.

Shirley Callie was divorcing her husband. She feared losing her house, which would force her family to move. She did not earn much as a paraprofessional and she did not have the strength or concentration at this time to return to college for a degree. Paying her bills and putting food on the table and a roof over her children's heads were her main concerns.

The problem that Principal Hillcroft now faced began when the superintendent sent Carol Baker to workshops to learn how to prepare a district-level workshop for administrators in the use of several new technology programs. This caused her absence for one week from the department. Bob, Stanley and Shirley were not happy campers when Carol returned. Bob believed that he should have gone for the training instead of Carol, Stanley passively sided with Bob, and Shirley, who didn't need much cause to vent her frustrations, acted coolly. A cold war broke out, but the three amigos would not tell Carol the reason behind their behavior.

Realizing that the situation needed to be resolved, Principal Hillcroft tried to recall some conversations that she and her father had had regarding situations with disgruntled personnel. Her dad had counseled, "Tomi, you can count on having days when it seems that your whole staff is at war. But the main goal to keep in mind is educating these kids—that's our job. The students have enough to contend with, without warfare in the faculty lounge. Be fair and listen to all sides before you decide what you will do next."

Tomi's first step was to meet with Bob. "Children first" was the theme of the conversation. In an open and trusting manner, the principal showed concern that the students were not receiving the best technology lessons possible. Bob felt comfortable in sharing his views of the situation.

"Tomi, I agree with you wholeheartedly—those are my sentiments exactly," he quickly answered. "Carol was gone; we had to double up on the students. I know she had a sub, but the district doesn't send us substitutes with computer knowledge. I don't think Carol is as dedicated to this program as she is in furthering her name in the district as 'the tech specialist.' Besides, since I developed the program at this school, I believe that I should have gone to that training with or without Carol. After all, this is only her first year at this school."

The principal thanked the disgruntled teacher for his time and information. She added that, as principal, she would have to consider the matter in light of what would be best for the students as well as the teachers; this program was too important to suffer because of personal factors.

Tomi saw Stanley in the lunchroom and casually said that she had been looking forward to meeting and talking with each faculty member. Stanley knew about Bob's meeting with the principal and decided to thicken the plot against Carol. In a conspiratorial whisper he answered, "We have a problem in the technology department. I felt quite impressed with Carol when she first came. There was so much that she knew and I didn't. But now, I'm not sure where she stands with our program. I think she acts like a 'know-it-all.' She was out for a week and will be out some more when she gives those workshops for the district. She just isn't as dedicated to our program as the rest of us."

Principal Hillcroft listened, told Stanley she would consider his comments, and then found an excuse to move on. She felt that it was time to bring Carol in for a chat, but Carol appeared in her office before Tomi could call her. She was there to discuss a workshop she wanted to give for the staff at next month's in-service. Tomi found a positive way to lead into the situation.

"Carol, I'm glad you came in. I've wanted to meet you. Tell me what you do here at our school and what you do for our district."

Carol sat down next to Tomi. She felt that she could also use this meeting to talk about the shunning she was experiencing in the department. She needed some answers on how to handle this situation.

"Well, I'm not sure where to begin," Carol replied. "I was put in this position by our superintendent to work with Bob on this new program that the high school is using. I had experience with writing computer curriculum at the high school level, and Bob and I were going to set up a curriculum for the junior high level.

"The program would make it easier for the students to continue at an advanced level once they reached high school, and they would have three extra years in computer technology by graduation. With the employment situation facing each graduating class, we need to put a sound technical

When Carol returned from workshops on new technology, the other staff members were not happy with her.

Bob, the disgruntled teacher, complained to Tomi that Carol "is not as dedicated to this program as she is in furthering her name in the district."

background in our students' hands so they can have a technological edge in the working world."

Tomi could see that Carol was concerned about the students and the program. She asked her if the training occurring as it did during school time interfered with the students' learning. Carol was quick to reply that even though she was out a total of two weeks, she had implemented all the new programs in her lessons. She had also planned with other teachers so that these lessons went beyond the computer lab and into the classrooms.

At her district-level workshops, she continued, she wanted to report the results from using these new programs with her students. Carol believed that if she could put theory into practice, the district would implement the programs in all of the secondary schools. At this point, Carol switched to the department problem, reporting that her co-workers in the computer lab had created a difficult situation by excluding her from department planning sessions and making negative remarks about her in the presence of students.

When she had confronted her colleagues, she stated, they had claimed there was nothing wrong and that they were just overworked. She had approached the former principal about the problem, but he was consumed with moving to his new assignment and had distractedly promised to check it out. Later, Carol said, she had learned from some faculty members that the principal was concerned that Bob would create problems for the school if he approached him. That was the main reason why that principal put Bob in charge of the technology department—he did not want parents complaining at the school or central office.

Carol finished with, "I wish politics didn't interfere with teaching students. It puts many people in an uncomfortable position. Neither the superintendent nor I knew of the relationship between that principal and Bob. The superintendent felt that I should attend the new training and pass it on in future workshops. That's the simple fact."

Principal Hillcroft responded with appreciation for Carol's openness and said that she would investigate the situation. The students came first at this school, she added, and personalities in the classrooms should not interfere with learning. Carol noticed the time and left for her bus duty.

Tomi exhaled a long breath and leaned back in the old leather chair. She pondered on the problem at hand. Each person in the technology department had a singular perception of the facts. Tomi knew that she had to solve this conflict soon to build a foundation of respect from staff. She wished that her father could give her some advice at this point, but all she could hear in her mind was her own small voice reminding her, "Dad said there would be days like this."

Cathie Brown is instructional specialist at Anderson Elementary School in the Conroe Independent School District in Conroe, Texas.

Case Study Response: A Professional Airing of Grievances Will Lead to Understanding

by John W. Rice

As a rookie principal, Tomi Hillcroft is facing a classic problem in this case study. Indeed, there are many days when there is discord among faculty members. Tomi has stepped into a situation where the three members of the technology department at David Charles Junior High are bitter and upset with newcomer Carol Baker, the district's resident technology expert. Bob Kitczienski, head of the technology department at David Charles, felt that he should have attended a workshop to which Carol had been sent by the superintendent. The bitterness and resentment that Bob developed from feeling slighted filtered throughout the department.

Unfortunately, the close-knit department members have closed their departmental proceedings to Carol, which has developed resentments on her part. Complicating matters is the fact that the previous principal studiously avoided irritating Bob because of the teacher's political clout in the community.

If the principal truly believes that "students come first," she should have a meeting with the members of the technology department, at which time all grievances can be aired in a professional manner. The parties involved have vented their feeling with Tomi personally, but not with each other. When they discuss these together, with Principal Hillcroft present to ensure professional attitudes throughout the meeting, they will begin to reach a mutual understanding. Bob will see that Carol was chosen by the superintendent to attend the workshop and that she is working toward developing curriculum and workshops to benefit all the students in the district. Carol will understand that Bob felt snubbed by not being the one chosen for the technical workshop.

Once mutual understanding is established, Tomi must ensure that Bob and the others in the department are fully cognizant of Carol's title and responsibilities within the district. It can be difficult for classroom teachers to understand why a teacher with district responsibilities is absent at times during the school year, but they must understand that Carol's work is for the ultimate benefit of all students in the district.

Finally, the principal should meet with the superintendent to request that Bob be sent with Carol to future workshops, or that he attend other productive technology sessions. For the moment, Tomi should direct Carol to share all of the materials that she has gleaned from the workshop in question with the technology department members. Tomi should also foster a spirit of cooperation between the department members and Carol, perhaps by attending a few of their meetings to ensure its development.

Resentment and bitterness may surface in any situation where people work together, and the school environment is no exception. The wise administrator seeks to resolve conflict peacefully among the personnel and to develop methods for handling the situations. By taking these positive steps and establishing patterns to alleviate future similar problems, Tomi Hillcroft will manage her faculty in a way that would have made her father proud.

John W. Rice is computer technologist for Robertson County Special Service Cooperative in Hearne, Texas.

Case Studies are edited by Philip T. West, professor emeritus, Texas A&M University, Harrington Education Center, College Station, TX 77843-4226.

Things taught in school are not an education but the means to an education.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Book Reviews

By Arthur W. Steller

Books for review and requests to serve as guest book reviewer may be sent to editor Arthur W. Steller, Superintendent of Kingston City Schools, 61 Crown St., Kingston, NY 12401

How to Involve Parents in a Multicultural School.

By Bruce Davis. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1995. 57pp. $8.95.

Parental involvement is a hot topic in education these days. Parent participation in schools is viewed as a means of improving communications and raising student achievement. Effective administrators and teachers have recognized that having parents as partners is like finding a gold mine of new resources. Suburban areas typically have an easier task in this regard than those with multicultural demographics. While there is something for everyone in this booklet, educators in a multicultural setting will especially find plenty of nuggets in this report of how the author views the challenge.

Bruce Davis is principal of the Ralph Waldo Emerson School in Rosemead, California. His school of 650 enrollment is made up of 23 Anglo students and 627 Asians and Latins from many different countries with many different customs, cultures and languages.

The fundamental premise of Davis is, "If you take care of the parents, they'll get involved, volunteer, or do just about anything you request. They'll take care of you." He acts on this belief by actively communicating with parents. For example, he has placed more than 23,000 positive phone calls to the parents of his students, with less than one-tenth of the calls being made during school hours.

He has designed a system that works like this—all students are recognized for achievements or other exploits at a weekly 15-minute assembly, along with adults who have done something noteworthy. Besides awarding paper certificates, "Each weekend, I take the slips home and start calling the families of the students. I usually have to make 38-44 calls. I can make about 18 to 25 calls an hour. I call in the evenings on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I also call on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 9 or 10 a.m." He records questions, compliments directed towards teachers and shares other information about upcoming events.

Much of this booklet reads like a public relations primer for principals. Yet, the author is a working principal, writing in the first person who lays it out with a here's-what-I-do-and-it-works style. This one is highly recommended as being a real KISS—keep it short and simple.

Your Opinions Please!—How to Build the Best Questionnaires in the Field of Education.

By James Cox. Corwin Press, Inc., 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320. 1996. 103pp. $21.95.

Questionnaires are a mainstay in educational research, both for scholarly purposes and practical uses. This short book is a clear, simple guide for the novice. The directions are to the point and easy to follow, with an absence of educational or research jargon.

Seven steps are cited, from establishing the guiding questions to marketing the final questionnaires to obtaining more responses. Chapters are also devoted to evaluating and validating the instrument, analyzing data, and communicating the results. A model is provided to walk the reader through every stage of the process.

Your Opinion Please! is a useful book for school public relations practitioners.

The Language of Learning: A Guide to Education Terms.

By J. Lynn McBrien and Ron Brandt. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 1997. 114pp. $13.95.

One of the complicating problems in education is dealing with the jargon. A teacher in one school uses a term differently than a teacher in another school. The difficulties jargon presents in communicating with parents or the general public are even more complicated.

While the information in this book will not solve all of these ills, it does provide an explanation of what numerous educational terms mean. Each work is described, often with examples, in everyday language. In many cases, two or more opinions are offered about a concept. There are additional resources provided, usually in the form of readings, for about a fourth of the definitions.

Win Win or Else: Collective Bargaining in an Age of Public Discontent.

By William Keane. Corwin Press, Inc., 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, CA 91320. 1996. 72pp. $15.

Every fall, various members of the national news media highlight the employee strife besetting some school districts across the country. In addition to these problems, other news covers communities dissatisfied with the employment contracts signed by teachers' unions and school boards. The cost is too high; reforms are lacking; contract language hamstrings management; board members are not listening to their publics—these are among the complaints voiced.

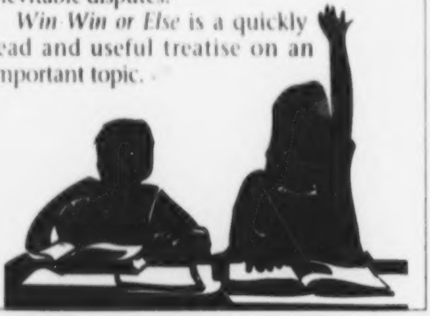
William Keane, a superintendent for 23 years, contends that this setting, already disconcerting, is drifting towards becoming even more strife-filled as the public is becoming more conservative. His position is that adversarial collective bargaining only adds fuel to the public's discontent.

The best means, he writes, to support the current governance structure of public education is through a win/win style of bargaining. Both sides should be endeavoring to build a long term relationship, if not a partnership. This translates into new approaches to bargaining.

Ideally, both sides in public school bargaining would be sufficiently enlightened to engage in mutual preparation prior to sitting down for formal talks. Joint training sessions on new approaches may help create a positive relationship.

Some writings on win/win bargaining are Polyannaish in the assumption that well-intentioned people, prepared with the proper techniques, will come to agreement without facing-off now and then. This booklet acknowledges that even in a partnership, conflicts are inherent in the relationship. It describes several ways to resolve inevitable disputes.

Win Win or Else is a quickly read and useful treatise on an important topic.



An Open Letter

Happy Lands Schools
Anytown

Dear Friend,

Now that the new school year is about to be upon us, we must take a long hard look at the past year as well as look ahead to what is in store for all of us in the future. I cannot help thinking that everyone's efforts cannot simply be measured along abstract lines, but rather all people actively engaged in altruistic and even noble work must bear the burden of scrutiny and face up to honest appraisal in a new and revitalized cultural milieu.

This school district has always been synonymous with the sum total of varied human experience—the inevitable result of withstanding the initiation of a long-range program in depth that is, naturally, so close to all citizens. The fiscal prominence, usually associated with endeavors of this sort, remains a challenge for the school board and all members of our professional staff as they weigh alternatives for positive action.

It is encouraging to ascertain those factors that many in our community have already assimilated to a great degree. I speak, of course, of our citizen groups that have given so unselfishly of their time to achieve this important goal. The students can only benefit from the realization of progress as they learn to make independent value judgments, and make them prudently. Their future will remain for all of us an exciting tribute to the perseverance and enthusiasm of all those involved.

The school buildings that must be built can only house those that strive to seek a way of reflecting on the key issues and basic problems that they can accept as a measure of excellence. How shallow can a reward be for any of us who so agree when we speak about quality vis-a-vis economy.

This, then, is the time for all of us to revise our thinking regarding local educational opportunity. We need to remember whatever heritage is significant, taking the necessary measures to communicate our ideas actively and consistently. We cannot choose any other course. The task ahead is great and unparalleled.

Let us join together for our common purpose.

Sincerely,
Your Superintendent

Dr. Butler was assistant to the superintendent for personnel and communication for a school system in Pennsylvania. He says he received a letter of this type a few years ago and still hasn't figured out the message.

Photo Credits

Addresses for photographers whose work we are using in Vol. 18, No. 4:

Michael Siluk
1000 3rd St., NW
New Brighton, MN 55112
612-636-5843

Geri Kody
Clark County Schools
4212 Eucalyptus Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89121
702-799-5442

1997 *Journal* Editorial Review Board

Larry Ascough, Elgin, IL

Don Bagin, Rowan College, Glassboro, NJ

William J. Banach, Banach, Banach, Cassidy, Ray, MI

B. Dean Bowles, University of Wisconsin

Carolyn H. Chapman, Univ. of Nevada, Reno

Marsha Chappelow, Overland Park, KS

Floyd Coppedge, State Secretary of Education, OK

Larry E. Decker, Florida Atlantic University

Don Gallagher, professor emeritus, Rowan College

Mel Heller, Loyola University, Chicago

Anne L. Jefferson, University of Ottawa

J. William Jones, PECO Energy Co., PA

Theodore J. Kowalski, Ball State University, IN

William Allan Kritsonis, Lake Charles, LA

Tami James Moore, University of Nebraska, Kearney

Frances Powell, Duval Co. Public Schools, FL

Donna M. Schmitt, Eastern Michigan University

I. Sue Shepard, Southeast Missouri State University

Harriett Stonehill, Megaskills Education Center, Washington, DC

Arthur W. Stellar, Kingston Schools, NY

Philip T. West, Texas A&M

Charles L. Willis, Dayton, OH

Brenda Williams, College of William and Mary, VA

Guidelines for Submission

Relations—The Journal of Educational Relations

A refereed journal--scholarly articles by academic/higher education authorities are refereed by an international editorial review board. The *Journal* also accepts articles by practitioners and administrators in basic (K-12) education and journalists at large.

Scope

Articles are sought on topics such as internal communication and climate, employee motivation, parent involvement, partnerships, working with the news media, community participation, audits, surveying and polls, community service programs for students, communication training, advisory committees, volunteers, writing and speaking, publications, alumni associations, foundations, mentoring, photography, and related topics.

The overall goal of the *Journal* is to support efforts to enhance/foster student achievement and staff productivity, and to provide information to build public knowledge of the value and potential benefits of a sound basic education of our youth. We advocate the concept that the school public relations function must be based on fact and reality as compared to ideals and goals of educators and the community at large.

Style

Scholarly articles can be prepared following style guidelines of the publication manual of the American Psychological Association, **with these exceptions:**

1. **Do not** place last names of authors being cited and the year *within* the text. Number citations sequentially in the text; provide usual citations in **references following the article**.

2. Before the start of the article, include a summary of the scope and major findings of the article in one paragraph.

We encourage you to include photographs, drawings, and tables as appropriate.

Submissions

- Submit four copies of a manuscript with a letter from the author(s).
- Articles should be 1,000 to 3,500 words in length.
- If produced on a computer, supply a disk, clearly labeled, in ASCII format, IBM format only, with the text copies.
- Include an abstract of the article and a two-three sentence credit for each author on a separate sheet.
- Advise if the article has been published or is being considered elsewhere.
- Queries for articles on specific topics are welcomed.
- SASE. Include a #10 self-addressed, stamped envelope for acknowledgement of receipt of your article. Include a 9" x 12" similar envelope for reply to submissions or queries.
- Response to an article or a query is usually conveyed to an author within 60 days.

Address manuscripts and correspondence to Albert E. Holliday, Editor and Publisher, Journal of Educational Relations, 1830 Walnut St., Camp Hill, PA 17011. 717-761-6620.

Previous *Journals* are available in microfilm from University Microfilm Int., 300 Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Refer to *Journal of Educational Communications* (1975-83), *Journal of Educational Public Relations* (1984-95) and *Journal of Educational Relations* (1995-).

Albert E. Holliday, Editor-Publisher
Journal of Educational Relations
P.O. Box 657
Camp Hill, PA 17001-0657

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #152
Camp Hill, PA 17011

Have You Heard?

Classified Ad in Writers Digest*:*
Need coauthor for book on self reliance.

• • •

*Working at what you enjoy is far more important than what you're working at...*Malcolm Forbes

• • •

*You can't believe everything you hear, but you can repeat it...*Sam Levenson

• • •

*In schools, the rewards for success must be greater than the penalties for failure...*Al Holliday

• • •

*You're the most tired when you're standing still...*Miss Piggy

• • •

*You're supposed to live so that people will want your autograph, not your fingerprints...*Wetherby Goode

• • •

*Today people ask their public schools to do what they used to ask their divine creator to do. That's a too tall order...*Jacqueline Price